

John A Walker

1767

A decorative flourish consisting of several overlapping loops and curves, rendered in a cursive style.



1568/1558.

*Theron* and *Aspasio*:

OR, A

S E R I E S

OF

D I A L O G U E S

AND

L E T T E R S,

UPON THE

Most *Important* and *Interesting* SUBJECTS.

---

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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By JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

Late Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

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*For Zion's sake will I not hold my Peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the Righteousness thereof go forth as Brightness, and the Salvation thereof as a Lamp that burneth. Isa. lxii. 1.*

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V O L. III.

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THE FOURTH EDITION.

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L O N D O N:

Printed by Charles Rivington,

For JOHN RIVINGTON, at the *Bible and Crown*,  
in *St. Paul's Church-yard*.

MDCCLXI.

THEORY and PRACTICE

OF A

SERIES

OF

DIALOGUES

AND

LETTERS

UPON THE

Most Important and Interesting Subjects.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY JAMES HERVEY, A.M.

Late Rector of St. John's Church, in Northampton.

The Author's intention was not to supply a new system of divinity, but to present a new method of teaching the Christian religion, and to show the necessity of a personal acquaintance with God, as the only way to true happiness and eternal life.

VOL. III.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

LONDON:

Printed by Charles Smith.

For John Richardson, at the Bible and Covenant

in St. Paul's Church-yard.

30.5.75





A  
S E R I E S  
O F  
L E T T E R S.

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L E T T E R VI.

T H E R O N *to* A S P A S I O.

Dear ASPASIO,

**T**HE last Evening was one of the finest I ever saw. According to my Custom, I made an Excursion into the open Fields; and wanted nothing to complete the Satisfaction, but my Friend's Company \*. I could not but observe, how much your improving Conversation heightened the Charms of Nature. When Religion applied Philosophy, every Thing was *instructive*, as well as *pleasing*.—Not a Breeze swept over the Plains, to clear the Sky, and

A 2

cool

\* *Tu quod abos excepto, cætera lætus.*



4      **THERON TO ASPASIO.      Let. 6.**

cool the Air; but it tended also to disperse our Doubts, and inviven our Faith in the Supreme All-sufficient **GOOD**.—Not a Cloud tinged the Firmament with radiant Colours, or amused the Sight with romantic Shapes; but We beheld a Picture of the present World, of its *fading* Acquisitions and *fantastic* Joys, in the mimic Forms and the transitory Scene.—Even the weakest of the Insect-tribe, that skim the Air in sportive Silence, addressed Us with the strongest Incitements, and gave Us the loudest Calls, to be *active* in our Day, and *useful* in our Generation. They cried, at least when You lent them your Tongue,

*Such is vain Life, an idle Flight of Days,  
A still delusive Round of sickly Joys,  
A Scene of little Cares, and trifling Passions,  
If not ennobled by the Deeds of Virtue.*

How often, at the Approach of sober Eve, have We stole along the Cloysters of a sequestered Bower; attentive to the Tale of some *querulous* Current, that seemed to be struck with Horror at the awful Gloom; and complained with heavier Murmurs, as it passed under the blackening Shades, and along the Root-obstructed Channel.—Or else, far from the babbling Brook, and softly treading the grassy Path, We listened to the *Nightingale's* Song: while every Gale held its Breath, and all the Leaves forbore their Motion, that they might neither drown nor interrupt the melodious Woe.—From both which pensive Strains, You endeavoured to temper and chastise the exuberant Gaiety of my Spirits. You convinced me, that *true* Joy is a serious Thing \*: is the Child of  
sedate

\* *Res severa est verum Gaudium.*      S E N.



fedate Thought, not the Spawn of intemperate Mirth : nursed, not by the Sallies of dissolute Merriment, but by the Exercise of serene Contemplation.

Sometimes, at the gladsome Return of Morn, we have ascended an airy Eminence ; and hailed the new-born Day ; and followed, with our delighted Eye, the Mazes of some glittering Stream.—Here *rushing*, with impetuous Fury, from the Mountain's Side ; foaming over the rifted Rocks, and roaring down the craggy Steep. Impatient as it were, to get free from such rugged Paths, and mingle with the Beauties of the lower Vale.—There, slackening its headlong Career, and smoothing its Eddies into an even Flow. While, deep embosomed in the verdant Mead, it *glides* through the cherished and smiling Herbage. Sometimes, lost amidst closing Willows ; sometimes, emerging with fresh Beauty from the leafy Covert ; always, roving with an air of amorous Complacency, as though it would caress the fringed Banks, and flowery Glebe.—Reminded, by this watery Monitor, of that Constancy and Vigour, with which the Affections should move towards the great Center of Happiness, CHRIST JESUS—of that determined Ardour, with which we should break through the Intanglements of Temptation, and Obstacles of the World, in order to reach our everlasting Rest—and of the mighty Difference between the turbulent, the frothy, the precipitate Gratifications of Vice, and the calm, the substantial, the permanent Delights of Religion.

Or else, with eager View, we have surveyed the extensive Prospect, and wandered over all the Mag-

nificence of Things—an endless Variety of graceful Objects, and delightful Scenes! Each soliciting our chief Regard; every one worthy of our whole Attention; all conspiring to touch the Heart with a mingled Transport of Wonder, of Gratitude, and of Joy.—So that we have returned from our rural Expedition, not as the *Spendthrift* from the Gaming-table, cursing his Stars, and raving at his ill Luck; gulled of his Money, and the derided Dupe of Sharpers: Not as the *Libertine* from the House of Wantonness \*, surfeited with the rank Debauch, dogged by Shame, goaded by Remorse, with a thousand recent Poisons tingling in his Veins. But we returned, as Ships of Commerce from the golden Continent, or the *spicy* Islands, with new Accessions of sublime Improvement,

\* *Solomon*, in order to deter unwary Youth from those Sinks of Uncleanneſs, represents the Harlot under the Character of a pestilent Hag, or baleful Sorceress. *Her Feet go down to Death*; Prov. v. 5. *Her House is the high Road to Hell*; Prov. vii. 27. *yea, her Guests are in the Depths of Hell*; Prov. ix. 18.—The second Clause seems to be emphatical. The original Expression is in the plural Number דֶּרֶךְ. I choose therefore to render it, not simply *The Road*, but more largely *The high Road*: from which many other Ways of Guilt branch out, in which many other Paths of Ruin coincide. There, Murder is often known, to drench her Dagger in Blood; and Robbery forms the rash Resolve, which ends in the ignominious Halter. There, Intemperance daily brews the Bowl, which enervates the Constitution, and transforms the Man into a Beast. While Disease, pale cadaverous noisome Disease, anticipates the Putrefaction of the Grave, and causes the wretched *Martyrs of Vice* to rot even above Ground.—Well may every one, who loves Life, and would fain see good Days, cry out with a Mixture of Detestation and Dread;—“O my Soul, come not thou into their horrid Haunts!”

Dei meliora Pius, Erroremque Hostibus illum! VIRG.

Let. 6. THERON to ASPASIO:

ment, and solid Pleasure. With a deeper Veneration for the Almighty CREATOR; with a warmer Sense of his unspeakable Favours; and with a more inflamed Desire, “to know him now by Faith, and  
“after this Life to have the Fruition of his glorious  
“GODHEAD.”

Sometimes, with an agreeable Relaxation, we have transferred our Cares, from the Welfare of the Nation, to the Flourishing of the Farm; and, instead of enacting Regulations for the civil Community, we have planned Schemes for the Cultivation of our Ground, and the Prosperity of our Cattle.—Instead of attending to the Course of Fleets, and the Destination of Armies, We have directed the Plough, where to rend the grassy Turf; or taught the Honey-suckle to wind round the Arbour, and the Jessamine to climb upon the Wall.—Instead of interpoling our friendly Offices, to reconcile contending Kingdoms; We have formed a *Treaty of Coalition*, between the stranger Cyon, and the adopting Tree; and, by the remarkable Melioration of the ensuing Fruit, demonstrated (would contending Empires regard the Precedent) what Advantages flow from pacific Measures, and an amicable Union.—Instead of unraveling the Labyrinths of State, and tracing the Finesses of foreign Courts; We have made ourselves acquainted with the *Politics* of Nature, and observed, how wonderfully, how mysteriously, that great Projectress acts.—In this Place she rears a vast Trunk, and unfolds a Multiplicity of Branches, from one small Berry. She qualifies, by her amazing Operations, a few contemptible Acorns, that were formerly carried in a Child's Lap, to bear the *British* Thunder



**THERON to ASPASIO. Let. 6.**

round the Globe, and secure to our Island the Sovereignty of the Ocean.—In another Place, she produces from a dry Grain, *first the green Blade; then the turgid Ear; afterwards the full-grown and ripened Corn in the Ear* \*. Repaying, with exact Punctuality, and with lavish Usury, the Husbandman's Toil, and the Husbandman's Loan: causing, by a most surprising Resurrection, the Death of one Seed, to be fruitful in the Birth of Hundreds.

But I forget your Caution, *Aspasio*; forget, how kindly you have checked me, when I have been harranguing upon, I know not what, Powers and Works of Nature. Whereas, it is **GOD** who *worketh hitherto* †: who to this Day exerts, and to the End of Time will exert, that secret but unremitting Energy, which is the Life of this majestic System, and the Cause of all its stupendous Operations.—Let this shew you, how much I want my Guide, my Philosopher, and Friend. Without his prompting Aid, my Genius is dull; my Reflections are awkward; and my religious Improvements jejune; somewhat like the *bungling* Imitations of the Fool, compared with the *masterly* Effects of Vegetation.—However, I will proceed. Yet, not from any View of informing my *Aspasio*, but only to draw a Bill upon his Pen; and lay him under an Obligation to enrich me with another Letter, upon the grand and excellent Subject of his last.

Art is dim-lighted in her Plans, and defective even in her most elaborate Essays. But Nature, or rather Nature's sublime **AUTHOR**, is indeed a Designer and

\* Mark iv. 28.

† John v. 17.



and a Workman that need not be ashamed. His Eye strikes out ten thousand elegant Models, and his Touch executes all with inimitable Perfection. What an admirable Specimen is Here, of the divine Skill, and of the divine Goodness! This terraqueous Globe is intended, not only for a Place of Habitation, but for a Storehouse of Conveniences. If We examine the several Apartments of our great Abode; if We take a general Inventory of our common Goods; We shall find the utmost Reason to be charmed with the Displays, both of nice Oeconomy, and of boundless Profusion.

Observe the Surface of this universal Messuage. The Ground, coarse as it may seem, and trodden by every Foot, is nevertheless the Laboratory, where the most exquisite Operations are performed; the Shop, if I may so speak, where the finest Manufactures are wrought. Though a Multitude of Generations have always been accommodated, and though a Multitude of Nations are daily supplied by its Liberalities, it still continues inexhausted. Is a Resource, that never fails; a Magazine, never to be drained.

The Unevenness of the Ground, far from being a Blemish or a Defect, heightens its Beauty, and augments its Usefulness. — Here, it is scooped into deep and sheltered Vales, almost constantly covered with a spontaneous Growth of Verdure: which, all tender and succulent, composes an easy Couch, and yields the most agreeable Fodder, for the various Tribes of Cattle. — There, it is extended into a wide, open, champain Country: which, annually replenished with the Husbandman's Seed, shoots into a copious Harvest.

vest. A Harvest, not only of that principal *Wheat*, which is the Staff of our Life, and strengthens our Heart; but of the appointed *Barley*\*, and various other Sorts of Grain, which yield an excellent Food for our Animals; and either enable them to dispatch our Drudgery, or else fatten their Flesh for our Tables.

The Furrows, obedient to the Will of Man, vary their Produce†. They bring forth a Crop of tall, flexible, slender Plants‡: whose thin filmy Coat, dried, attenuated, and skilfully manufactured, transforms itself into some of the most necessary *Accommodations* of Life, and genteel *Embellishments* of Society.—It is wove into ample Volumes of Cloth; which, fixed to the Mast, give Wings to our Ships, and waft them to the Extremities of the Ocean.—It is twisted into vast Lengths of Cordage; which add Nerves to the Crane, and lend Sinews to the Pulley; or else, adhering to the Anchor, they fasten the Vessel even on the fluctuating Element, and secure its Station even amidst driving Tempests.—It furnishes the Duchess with her costly Head-dress, and delicately fine Ruffles. No less strong than neat, it supplies the Plowman with his coarse Frock, and the Sailor with his clumsy Trowsers. Its Fibres, artfully ranged by the Operations of the Loom, cover our Tables with a graceful Elegance, and surround our Bodies with a cherishing Warmth. On this the Painter spreads the Colours,

\* Isa. xxviii. 25.

† One may venture to say of the Earth, with regard to its vegetable Operation;

*Omnia transformat sese in Miracula Rerum.*

‡ Flax and Hemp.

Colours, which inchant the Eye; in this the Merchant packs the Wares, which enrich the World.

Yonder, the *Hills*, like a grand Amphitheatre, arise. Amphitheatre! All the pompous Works of *Roman* Magnificence, are less than Mole-banks, are mere Cockle-shells, compared with those majestic Elevations of the Earth. Some clad with mantling Vines; some crowned with towering Cedars; some ragged with mishapen Rocks, or yawning with subterraneous Dens. Whose rough and inaccessible Craggs, whose hideous and gloomy Cavities, are not only a continual Refuge for the wild Goats, but have often proved an Asylum to persecuted Merit \*, and a Safeguard to the most valuable Lives.

At a greater Distance, the *Mountains* lift their frozen Brows, or penetrate the Clouds with their aspiring Peaks. Their frozen Brows *arrest* the roving, and *condense* the rarefied Vapours †. Their caverned Bowels collect the dripping Treasures, and send them abroad, in gradual Communications, by trickling Springs. While their steep Sides *precipitate* the watery Stores; rolling them on with such a forcible Impulse ‡, that they never intermit their unwearied Course,

\* To David, from Saul's Malice; to *Elijah*, from *Jezebel's* Vengeance; to many of the primitive *Christians*, from the Rage of persecuting Emperors: they wandered in Deserts and in Mountains, in Dens and Caves of the Earth. Heb. xi. 38.

† Therefore styled—*Nimbosa Cacumina Montis*. VIRG.

‡ It is observed, that the largest Rivers in the World, those which roll the heaviest Burden of Waters, and perform the most extensive Circuit through the Nations, generally take their Rise from Mountains. The *Rhine*, the *Rhone*, and the *Po*, all descend from the *Alps*. The *Tygris* derives



Course, till they have swept through the most extensive Climes, and regained their native Seas.

The *Vineyard* swells into a Profusion of Clusters: some tinged with the deepest Purple, and delicately clouded with Azure: some, clad with a whitish transparent Skin, which shews the tempting Kernels, lodged in luscious Nectar. — The Vine requires a strong Reflection of the Sun-beams, and a very large Proportion of Warmth. How commodiously do the Hills and Mountains minister to this Purpose! May We not call those vast Declivities, the *Garden-walls* of Nature? Which, far more effectually than the most costly Glasses, or most artful Green-houses, concenter the solar Heat, and complete the Maturity of the Grape. Diffending it with a Liquor of the finest Scent, the most agreeable Relish, and the most exalted Qualities: such as dissipate Sadness, and inspire Vivacity: such as make glad the Heart of Man, and most sweetly prompt, both his Gratitude, and his Duty, to the Munificent GIVER. — I grieve, and I blush for my Fellow-creatures, that

derives its rapid Flood, from the everlasting Snows, and steep Ridges of *Niphates*. And, to mention no more Instances, the River *Amazones*, which pours itself through a Multitude of Provinces, and waters near eighteen hundred Leagues of Land, has its Urn in the Caverns, and its Impetus from the Precipices, of that immense Range of Hills, the *Andes*.

If the Reader is inclined to see the Origin and Formation of Rivers described, in all the Sublimity of Diction, and with all the Graces of Poetry, He may find this Entertainment in Mr. Thomson's *Autumn*, *lin.* 781. Last Edit.

*Amazing Scene! behold, the Gloams disclose.  
I see the Rivers in their infant Beds!  
Deep, deep I hear them, lab'ring to get free! &c.*



that any should *abuse* this Indulgence of Heaven. That Any should turn so valuable a Gift of GOD into an Instrument of Sin. Turn the most exhilarating of Cordials into Poison, Madness, and Death.

The *Kitchen-garden* presents Us with a new Train of Benefits. In its blooming Ornaments, what unaffected Beauty! In its culinary Productions, what diversified Riches! It ripens a Multitude of nutritional Esculents, and almost an equal Abundance of medicinal Herbs; distributing Refreshments to the Healthy, and administering Remedies to the Sick.—The *Orchard*, all fair, and ruddy, and bowing down beneath its own delicious Burden, gives Us a fresh Demonstration of our CREATOR's Kindness. Regales Us, first, with all the Delicacies of Summer-Fruits; next, with the more lasting Succession of Autumal Dainties.

What is Nature, but a Series of Wonders, and a Fund of Delights! That such a Variety of Fruits, so beautifully coloured, so elegantly shaped, and so charmingly flavoured, should arise from the Earth! Than which nothing is more insipid, sordid, and despicable.—I am struck with pleasing Astonishment at the *Cause* of these fine Effects, and no less surprised at the *Manner* of bringing them into Existence. I take a Walk in my Garden, or a Turn through my Orchard, in the Month of *December*. There stand several Logs of Wood, fastened to the Ground. They are erect indeed and shapely, but without either Sense or Motion. No human Hand will touch them; no human Aid will succour them; yet, in a little Time, they are beautified with Blossoms, they are covered with Leaves, and

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at last are loaded with mellow Treasures; with the downy Peach and the polished Plum; with the musky Apricot and the juicy Pear; with the Cherry, and its coral Pendants, glowing through Lattices of Green,

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and dark  
Beneath her ample Leaf, the luscious Fig.

I have wondered at the Structure of my Watch; wondered more at the Description of the Silk-mills; most of all, at the Account of those prodigious Engines, invented by *Archimedes*. But what are all the Inventions of all the Geometricians and Mechanics in the World, compared with these inconceivably nice *Automata*\* of Nature! These *self-operating Machines* dispatch their Business, with a Punctuality that never mistakes, with a Dexterity that cannot be equaled. In Spring, they clothe themselves with such unstudied but exquisite Finery, as far exceeds the Embroidery of the Needle, or the Labours of the Loom.

\* *Automata*, or *self-operating Machines*; not meant to set aside the Superintendency of Providence, but only to exclude the Co-operation of Man.

The Word *αὐτομάτη* is used by our MASTER; is a very fine, and most expressive Word; for which Reasons, I have ventured to give it a Kind of *English* Naturalization. It signifies, says a *Greek Scholiast*, τὰς μηχανάς, αἱ κατ' αὐτὰς ἐργάζονται. See *Mark* iv. 28.—It is an Explication and an Abridgment of that remarkable Phrase, which occurs in the *Mosaic History* of the Creation, אֲשֶׁר בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים לַעֲשׂוֹת *Gen.* ii. 3. Which GOD created and made, appears tautological, and is by no means an exact Translation. It should rather be interpreted, Which GOD created in order to make; to make, by these prolific Instruments and re-producing Principles, a continual Succession of Animals, Vegetables, and Creatures.

Loom. In Autumn, they present Us with such a Collation of Sweetmeats, and such Blandishments of Taste, as surpass all that the most critical Luxury could prepare, or the most lavish Fancy imagine.— So that those *coarse* and *senseless* Logs, first decorate the divine Creation, then perform the Honours of the Table.

If, amidst these ordinary Productions of the Earth, GOD appears so *great in Counsel and mighty in Work*\*: what may We expect to see, in the Palaces of Heaven; in the Hierarchies of Angels; and in that wonderful REDEEMER, who is, beyond all other Objects, beyond all other Manifestations, *the Wisdom of GOD, and the Power of GOD*†.

The *Forest* rears Myriads of massy Bodies, which, though neither gay with Blossoms, nor rich with Fruit, supply Us with Timber of various Kinds, and of every desirable Quality ‡. But who shall cultivate such huge Trees, diffused over so vast a Space? The Toil were endless. See therefore the all-wise and ever-gracious Ordination of Providence! They are so constituted, that they have no Need of the Spade and the Pruning-knife. Nay, the little Cares of Man

\* Jer. xxxii. 19.

† 1 Cor. i. 24.

‡ Tully has given Us an Abridgment of all the preceding Particulars. Which, I think, is one of the finest Landscapes in Miniature, that the descriptive Pen ever drew.—*Terra universa cernatur, vestita Floribus, Herbis, Arboribus, Frugibus; quorum omnium incredibilis Multitudo insatiabili Varietate distinguitur. Adde huc Fontium gelidas Perennitates, Liquores perlucidos Amnium, Riparum Vestitus viridissimos, Speluncarum concavas Altitudines, Saxorum Asperitates, impendentium Montium, Altitudines Immenitatesque Camporum.* De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.



Man would diminish, rather than augment their Dignity and their Usefulness. The more they are neglected, the better they thrive; the more wildly grand and magnificent they grow.

When felled by the Axe, they are sawed into Beams, and sustain the Roofs of our Houses: they are fashioned into Carriages, and serve for the Conveyance of the heaviest Loads.—Their Substance so *pliant*, that they yield to the Chizzel of the Turner, and are smoothed by the Plane of the Joiner; are wrought into the nicest Diminutions of Shape, and compose some of the finest Branches of Household Furniture.—Their Texture so *solid* that they form the most important Parts of those mighty Engines; which, adapting themselves to the Play of mechanic Powers, dispatch more Work in a single Hour, than could otherwise be accomplished in many Days.—At the same Time, their Pressure is so *light*, that they float upon the Waters; and glide along the Surface, almost with as much Agility, as the finny Fry glance through the Deep.—Thus, while they impart Magnificence to Architecture, and bestow numberless Conveniencies on the Family; they constitute the very Basis of Navigation, and give Expedition, give Being to Commerce.

Amidst the inaccessible Depths of the Forest, an Habitation is assigned for those *ravenous* Beasts, whose Appearance would be frightful, and their Neighbourhood dangerous to Mankind. Here, the sternly majestic Lion rouses Himself from his Den; stalks through the midnight Shades; and awes the savage Herds with his Roar. Here, the fiery Tyger springs upon his Prey, and the gloomy Bear trains up her Whelps.



Whelps. Here, the swift Leopard ranges, and the grim Wolf prowls, and both in quest of Murder and Blood.—Were these horrid Animals to dwell in our Fields, what *Havock* would they make? What *Consternation* would they spread? But they voluntarily bury themselves, in the deepest Recesses of the Desert: while the Ox, the Horse, and the serviceable Quadrupeds, live under our Inspection, and keep within our Call: profiting Us as much by their Presence, as the others oblige Us by their Absence.

If, at any Time, those shaggy Monsters make an Excursion into the habitable World, it is when Man retires to his Chamber, and sleeps in Security. The Sun, which invites other Creatures abroad, gives them the Signal to retreat. *The Sun ariseth, and they get them away, and lay them down in their Dens* \*. Strange! That the orient Light, which is so pleasing to Us, should strike such Terror on them! Should, more effectually than a Legion of Guards, put them all to flight, and clear the Country of those formidable Enemies!

If we turn our Thoughts to the *Atmosphere*, We find a most curious and exquisite Apparatus of *Air*. Which, because no Object of our Sight, is seldom observed, and little regarded; yet is a Source of innumerable Advantages. And all these Advantages (which is almost incredible) are fetched from the very Jaws of Ruin. My Meaning may be obscure, therefore I explain myself.

We live plunged, if I may so speak, in an Ocean of Air. Whose *Pressure*, upon a Person of moderate

\* Psal. civ. 22.

rate Size, is equal to the Weight of *twenty thousand Pounds*. Tremendous Consideration! Should the Ceiling of a Room, or the Roof of a House, fall upon Us with half that Force, what destructive Effects must ensue. Such a Force would infallibly drive the Breath from our Lungs, or break every Bone in our Bodies. Yet, so admirably has the Divine Wisdom contrived this aerial Fluid, and so nicely counterpoised its dreadful Power, that We receive not the slightest Hurt; We suffer no manner of Inconvenience; We even *enjoy* the Load. Instead of being as a Mountain on our Loins, it is like Wings to our Feet, or like Sinews to our Limbs.—Is not this *common* Ordination of Providence, thus considered, somewhat like the Miracle of the burning Bush; whose tender and combustible Substance, though in the midst of Flames, was neither consumed nor injured \*? Is it not almost as marvelous, as the Prodigy of the three *Hebrew* Youths? Who walked in the fiery Furnace, without having a Hair of their Head singed, or so much as the Smell of Fire passing on their Garments †?—Surely, We have Reason to say unto GOD; *O! how terrible, yet how beneficent, art Thou in thy Works!*

The Air, though too weak to support *our* Flight, is a Thoroughfare for innumerable Wings. Here the whole Commonwealth of *Birds* take up their Abode. Here they lodge and expatiate, beyond the Reach of their Adversaries. Were they to run upon the Earth, they would be exposed to ten thousand Dangers, without proper Strength to resist them, or  
sufficient

\* Exod. iii. 2.

† Dan. iii. 27.

sufficient Speed to escape them. Whereas, by mounting the Skies, and *lifting themselves up on high*, they are secure from Peril, *they scorn the Horse and his Rider* \*.—Some of them perching upon the Boughs, others soaring amidst the Firmament, entertain Us with their *Notes*. Which are musical and agreeable, when heard at this convenient Distance; but would be noisy and importunate, if brought nearer to our Ears.—Here, many of those feathered Families reside, which yield Us a delicious *Treat*; yet give Us no Trouble, put Us to no Expence, and, till the Moment We want them, are wholly out of our Way.

The Air, commissioned by its All-bountiful AUTHOR, charges itself with the Administration of several Offices, which are perfectly obliging, and no less serviceable to Mankind.—Co-operating with our Lungs, it *ventilates* the Blood, and refines our Fluids. It qualifies and attempers the vital Warmth; promotes and exalts the animal Secretions. Many Days We might live, or even whole Months, without the Light of the Sun, or the Glimmering of a Star. Whereas, if We are deprived, only for a few Minutes, of this aerial Support, We sicken, We faint, We die.—The same *universal Nurse* has a considerable Share, in cherishing the several Tribes of Plants. It helps to transfuse vegetable Vigour into the Trunk of the Oak, and a blooming Gaiety into the Spread of the Rose.

The Air undertakes to convey to our Nostrils the extremely subtil *Effluvia*, which transpire from odoriferous Bodies. Those detached Particles are so

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imper-

\* Job xxxix. 13.

imperceptibly small, that they would elude the most careful Hand, or escape the nicest Eye. But this trusty Depositary *receives* and *escorts* the invisible Vagrants, without losing so much as a single Atom. Entertaining Us, by this means, with the delightful Sensations, which arise from the Fragrance of Flowers; and admonishing Us, by the Transmission of offensive Smells, to withdraw from an unwholesome Situation, or beware of any pernicious Food.

The Air, by its undulating Motion, conducts to our Ear all the Diversities of Sound; and, thereby discharges the Duty of a most seasonable and faithful Monitor. As I walk across the Streets of *London*, with my Eye engaged on other Objects; a Dray, perhaps, with all its Load, is driving down directly upon me. Or, as I ride along the Road, musing and unapprehensive, a Chariot and six is whirling on, with a rapid Career, at the Heels of my Horse. The Air, like a *vigilant* Friend, in pain for my Welfare, immediately takes the Alarm: and, while the Danger is at a considerable Distance, dispatches a Courier to advertise me of the approaching Mischief. It even thunders in my Ear; and, with a *clamorous* but *kind* Importunity, urges me to be upon my Guard, and provide for my Safety.

The Air wafts to our Sense all the Modulations of *Music*, and the more agreeable Entertainments of refined Conversation. When *Myrtilla* strikes the silver Strings, and teaches the willing Harpsichord to warble with her CREATOR's Praise: When her sacred Sonata warms the Heart with Devotion, and wings our Desires to Heaven.—When *Cleora* tunes her Song, or the Nightingale imitates her enchanting Voice:



Voice: when she heightens every melodious Note, with her adored REDEEMER's Name; and so smooths her charming Tones, so breathes her rapturous Soul, "that GOD's own Ear listens delighted".—When Wisdom takes it Seat on *Mitio's* Tongue; and flows, in perspicuous Periods, and instructive Truths, amidst the chosen Circle of his Acquaintance.—When Benevolence, associated with Persuasion, dwell on *Nicander's* Lips; and plead the Cause of injured Innocence, or oppressed Virtue.—When Goodness, leagued with Happiness, accompany *Eusebius* into the Pulpit; and reclaim the Libertine from the Slavery of his Vices; disengage the Infidel from the Fascination of his Prejudices; and so affectionately, so pathetically invite the whole Audience, to partake the unequalled Joys of pure Religion.—In all these Cases, the Air distributes every musical Variation with the utmost *Exactness*; and delivers the Speaker's Message, with the most punctual *Fidelity*. Whereas, without this Internuntio, all would be sullen and unmeaning Silence. We should lose both the Pleasure and the Profit; neither be charmed with the harmonious, nor improved by the articulate Accents.

The Breezes of the Air, when vague and unconfined, are so very gentle; that they sport with the most inoffensive Wantonness, amidst *Ophelia's* Locks, and scarce disadjust a single Curl. But, when collected and applied by the Contrivance of Man, they act with such *prodigious Force*; as is sufficient to whirl round the hugest Wheels, though clogged with the most incumbering Loads. They make the ponderous Millstones move as swiftly, as the Dancer's

Heel : and the massy Beams play as nimbly, as the Musician's Finger.

If We climb, in Speculation, the higher Regions, We find an endless Succession of *Clouds*, fed by Evaporations from the Ocean. The Clouds are themselves a Kind of Ocean, suspended in the Air with amazing Skill. They travel, in detached Parties, and in the Quality of *itinerant Cisterns*, round all the terrestrial Globe. They fructify, by proper Communications of Moisture, the spacious Pastures of the Wealthy; and gladden, with no less liberal Showers, the Cottager's little Spot. Nay, so condescending is the Benignity of their great Proprietor, that they *satisfy the desolate and waste Ground; and cause, even in the most uncultivated Wilds, the Bud of the tender Herb to spring forth* \*. That the Natives of the lonely Desert, those savage Herds which know no Master's Stall, may nevertheless experience the Care, and rejoice in the Bounty, of an All-supporting PARENT.

How wonderful ! That the Water, which is much denser and far heavier than the Air, should rise into it; make its way through it; and take a Station in the very uppermost Regions of it ! This, One would imagine, were almost as impossible, as for the Rivers to run back to their Source. Yet Providence has contrived a way to render it not only practicable, but Matter of continual Occurrence.

How wonderful ! That *pendent Lakes* should be diffused, or *fluid Mountains* heaped over our Heads; and

\* Job. xxxviii. 27.

and both sustained in the thinnest Parts of the Atmosphere ! We little think of that surprising Expedient, which, without Conduits of Stone, or Vessels of Brass, keeps such Loads of Water in a buoyant State. *Job* and *Elihu* considered this, and were struck with holy Admiration. *Dost thou know the Balancings of the Clouds ?* How such ponderous Bodies are made to hang with an even Poise, and hover like the lightest Down ? These are the wondrous Works of *HIM*, who is perfect in Knowledge \*. *He bindeth up the Waters in his thick Clouds ; and the Cloud, though nothing is more loose and fluid, becomes, by his Almighty Order, strong and tenacious as Casks of Iron ; it is not rent † under all the Weight.*

When the Sluices are opened, and the Waters descend, We might reasonably suspect, that they should burst forth in Cataracts, or pour themselves out in Torrents. Whereas, instead of such a disorderly and precipitate Effusion, which would be infinitely pernicious, they coalesce into Globules, and are dispensed in gentle Showers. They are often attenuated into the Smallness of a Hair † ; they spread themselves, as if they were strained through the Orifices of the finest Watering-pot ; and form those small Drops of Rain, which the Clouds distil upon Man abundantly §. Thus, instead of drowning the Earth, and sweeping away its Fruits, they cherish universal Nature ; and, in Conformity to the Practice of their great MASTER, distribute their humid Stores

B 4

\* *Job xxxvii. 16.*

† *Job xxvi. 8.*

‡ The Hebrew Words, which convey the Idea of gentle Rain, signify a Portion of Water, made small as a Hair, or divided into Millions of Parts, שְׁעָרִים וְרִבְבֵּי בַּיִת דֵּיּוֹת Deut. xxxii. 2.

§ *Job xxxvi. 28.*



to Men, to Animals, and Vegetables, as they are able to bear them \*.

Besides the Reservoirs of Water, here are cantoned various Parties of *Winds*, mild or fierce, gentle or boisterous; furnished with breezy Wings, to fan the glowing Firmament, and diffuse Refreshment on a fainting World: or else, fitted to act as an universal *Besom*; and, by sweeping the Chambers of the Atmosphere, to preserve the fine aerial Fluid free from Feculencies. Without this wholesome Agency of the Winds, the Air would stagnate; become putrid; and surround Us, in the literal Sense of the Words, with *Darkness that might be felt* †. London, Paris, and all the great Cities in the World, instead of being the Seats of Elegance, would degenerate into Sinks of Corruption.

At Sea, the Winds swell the Mariner's Sails, and speed his Course along the watery Way: speed it far more effectually, than a thousand Rowers, bending to their Strokes, and tugging at the Oar.—By Land, they perform the Office of an immense Seed-man, and scatter abroad the reproductive Principles of a Multitude of Plants; which, though the Staff of Life to many Animals, are too small for the Management, or too mean for the Attention of Man.—*HE bringeth the Winds out of his Treasuries* †, is a very just Observation; whether it relate to GOD's absolute and uncontrollable Dominion over this most potent Meteor, or to its welcome and salutary Influence ‡ on all the Face of Nature.

Here  
 Mark iv. 33. † Exod. x. 21.  
 Psal. cxxxv. 7. *Quam salubres autem dedit, quam tempestivos non modo Hominum, sed etiam Pecudum Genet, iis de-*  
*nique*



Here are *Lightnings* stationed. Though dormant at present, they are in act to spring, and launch the livid Flame: whenever their piercing Flash is necessary to destroy the *sulphureous* Vapours; or dislodge any other *noxious* Matter, which might be prejudicial to the delicate Temperature of the *Æther*, and obscure its more than crystalline Transparency.

Above all is situate a *radiant* and *majestic* Orb; which inlightens the Tracts, cheers the Inhabitants, and colours all the Productions of this habitable Globe. While the Air, by a singular Address in managing the Rays, amplifies their Usefulness: its *reflecting* Power \* augments that Heat, which is the Life of Nature; its *refracting* Power prolongs that Splendor, which is the Beauty of the Creation.—

These

*nique omnibus quæ oriuntur à Terra, Ventos? Quorum Flata nimii temperantur Calores, ab iisdem etiam maritimi Cursus celeres & certi diriguntur. De Nat. Deor. Lib. II.*

\* The Air is a curious *Cover*, which, without oppressing the Inhabitants of the Earth with any perceivable Weight, confines, reflects, and thereby *increases* the vivifying Heat of the Sun. The Air increases this kindly Heat, much in the same manner as our Garments by Day, or Bed-clothes by Night, give additional Warmth to our Bodies.—Whereas, when the aerial Vestment grows thin, or, to speak more philosophically, when the Air becomes less in Quantity, and more *attenuated* in Quality, the solar Warmth is very sensibly diminished. Travelers on the lofty Mountains of *America*, sometimes experience, to their terrible Cost, the Truth of this Observation. Though the Climate, at the Foot of those prodigious Hills, is even hot and sultry; yet on their Summits, the Cold rages with such excessive Severity, that it is no unusual Calamity, for the Horse and his Rider to be frozen to death.—We have therefore great Reason to bless the Supreme DISPOSER of Things, for placing Us in the *commodious* Concavity, or rather under the *cherishing* Wings of an Atmosphere.

These Emanations of Light, though formed of inactive Matter, yet (astonishing Apparatus of Almighty Wisdom!) are refined almost to the *Subtily* of Spirit, and are scarce inferior even to Thought in *Speed*. By which means, they spread themselves, with a Kind of instantaneous Swiftness, through the Circumference of a whole Hemisphere; and though they fill, wherever they pervade, yet they straiten no Place, embarrass no One, incumber Nothing.

These give the Diamond its Brilliancy, and the Velvet its Gloss: to these the chearful Eye is obliged for its lively Sparkle, and the modest Cheek for its rosy Blush. These, attending the judicious Touches of the Pencil, bid the Drapery flow, and the embodied Figure arise; bid the Countenance wear the calm Serenity of Thought, or be agitated with the wild Transports of Passion.—Without this Circumstance of *Colour*, we should want all the Entertainments of Vision, and be at a Loss to distinguish one Thing from another. We should hesitate to pronounce, and must take a little Journey to determine, whether yonder Inclosure contains a Piece of Pasturage, or a Plot of arable Land. We should question, and could not very expeditiously resolve, whether the next Person We meet, be a Soldier in his Regimentals, or a Swain in his Holiday Suit? A Bride in her Ornaments, or a Widow in her Weeds. But Colour, like a particular Livery, characterizes the Class, to which every Individual belongs. It is the *Label*, which indicates, upon the first Inspection, its respective Quality. It is the *Ticket*, which guides our Choice, and directs our Hand\*.

We

\* This, I believe, suggests the true Sense of those noble Metaphors, used by the divine Speaker. *It is turned as Clay*

We have cursorily surveyed the *upper Rooms* of our great Habitation, and taken a Turn along the *Ground-floor*; if We descend into the subterraneous Lodgments, the *Cellars* of the stately Structure, We shall there also find the most exquisite Contrivance, acting in Concert with the most profuse Goodness.—Here are various *Minerals*, of sovereign Efficacy in Medicine: which rectify the vitiated Blood, and quicken the languid Spirits; which often rekindle the fading Bloom in the Virgin's Complexion, and reinvigorate the infeebled Arm of Manhood.—Here are Beds fraught with *Metals* of the richest Value. From hence come the golden Treasures, from hence the silver Stores, which are the very Life of Traffic; and circulate through the Body politic, as the vital Fluid through the animal Frame. Which, in the refining Hand of Charity, are Feet to the Lame, and Eyes to the Blind, and make the Widow's Heart sing for Joy.—Here are Mines, which yield a Metal of meaner Aspect,

but

*Clay to the Seal, and they stand as a Garment: It, the Earth, and all its Productions receive, from the rising Sun, both Colour and Beauty. Just as the soft Clay, and the melting Wax, receive an elegant Impression from the Seal.—They (the Morning and the Day-spring, mentioned in a preceding Verse) stand as a Garment; they act the Part of a magnificent and universal Clothing; give all visible Objects, their comely Aspect, and graceful Distinctions.*  
*Job xxxviii. 14.*

What bold and fine Images are here!—The *Sea* had been described as an *Infant*, changeable, froward, and impetuous, with thick Darkness for its Swadling-band. The *Light* is represented as an *Handmaid*, attending to dress the Creation; and executing the CREATOR's Orders, with a *Punctuality* that never fails, with a *Speed* that cannot be equalled.



but of a firmer Cohesion, and of superior Usefulness. A Metal, that constitutes almost all the Implements, with which Art executes her various Designs. Without the Assistance of *Iron*, Trade would be reduced to the lowest Ebb; Commerce would feel her Wings clipped; and every Species of mechanic Skill, either utterly fail, or be miserably baffled. Without the Assistance of *Iron*, it would be almost impossible to rear the steady Mast, to display the daring Canvas or drop the faithful Anchor. Destitute of this ever-needed Commodity, we should have no Plow to furrow the Soil, no Shuttle to traverse the Loom, scarce any Ornament for polite, or any Utensil for ordinary Life.

Here is an inexhausted Fund of *combustible* Materials\*, which supply the whole Nation with Fuel. These present their Ministrations in the Kitchen; and yielding themselves as Aliment to the Flame, render our Food both palatable and healthy.—These offer their Service at the Forge; and, with their piercing Heat, molify the most stubborn Bars, till they become pliant to the Stroke of the Hammer.—The *Coals* pour themselves likewise into the Glass-houles. They rage, amidst those astonishing Furnaces, with irresistible but useful Fierceness. They liquify even the obdurate Flint, and make the most rigid Substances far more ductile, than the softest Clay,

\* *As for the Earth, says Job, out of it cometh Bread: Corn, Vegetables, and whatever is good for Food, spring from its Surface. While under it, is turned up as it were Fire: its lower Parts ירדו its deeper Strata, yield combustible Materials; which are easily inkindled into Fire, and administer the most substantial Fuel for the Flame. Job xxviii. 5.*



Clay, or the melting Wax: make them obsequious, not only to the lightest Touch, but to the Impressions of our very Breath.

By this means, we are furnished, and from the coarsest Ingredients, with the most curious, beautiful, and serviceable Manufacture in the World. A Manufacture, which transmits the Light and Warmth of the Sun into our Houses; yet excludes the Annoyance of the Rains, and the Violence of the Winds. Which gives *new Eyes* to decrepit Age, and vastly *more enlarged Views* to Philosophy and Science: which leads up the Astronomer's Discernment, even to the *Satellites of Saturn*; and carries down the Naturalist's Observation, as far as the Animalcule Race: bringing near what is immensely remote, and making visible what, to our unassisted Sight, would be absolutely imperceptible.

We have also, when the Sun withdraws his Shining, an Expedient to supply his Place. We can create an *artificial Day* in our Rooms, and prolong our Studies, or pursue our Business, under its chearing Influence. With beaming Tapers and ruddy Fires, We chase the Darknefs, and mitigate \* the Cold;

\* I can hardly forbear transcribing the grateful and pious Remark, which *Socrates* makes on this Occasion. Demonstrating, from the advantageous and benign Constitution of Things, GOD's indulgent Care for Mankind, He asks; Το δε κ' το πυρ πορισται ημιν, επικερρον μιν ψυχης, επικερρον δε σκολης, συνερον δε πρὸ πάσαν τέχνην, κ' παντα οσα ωφελειας ενεκα ανθρωποι κατασκευαζονται; Ως γαρ συνεδοις ειπειν, εδεν αξιολογον αυτου πυρὸς ανθρωποι των πρὸ βιοι χρησιμων κατασκευαζονται.—To which his Pupil very intelligently replies, Υπερβαλλει κ' τειλο φιλανθρωπια. *Vid. Socrat. Memor. Lib. IV.* A Work, which may be ranked among the *finest Remains* of Antiquity. Equal, 'tis acknowledged, to any of the antient

Cold; We cherish Conversation, and cultivate the social Spirit. We render those very Intervals of Time, some of the most delightful Portions of our Life, which otherwise would be a joyless and unimproving Void.

These obscure Caverns are the Birth-place of the most sparkling *Gems*. Which, when nicely polished, and prodigal of their Lustre, stand Candidates for a Place on the royal Crown, or a Seat on the *virtuous* Fair One's Breast. And, I will not with our Men of Gallantry say, emulate the living Brilliancy of her Eyes; but serve as a Foil, to set off the Loveliness and Excellency of her accomplished Mind, and amiable Conversation: *whose Price*, according to the unerring Estimate of Inspiration, is superior to Sapphires, *is far above Rubies* \*.

Here are *Quarries*, stocked with Stones, inferior in Beauty to the Jeweler's Ware, but much more eminently beneficial. Which, when properly ranged,  
and

antient Compositions in Purity of Style, and Dignity of Sentiment. *Superior*, I think, to them all, for the artful, delicate, and happy Manner of conveying Instruction.

I wish, the Author of the preceding Dialogues had been better acquainted with the *Socratic* Method; and I could wish, that young Students for the Ministry would adopt the Skill of this *heathen* Philosopher. Perhaps, no Qualification of human Growth, would more effectually contribute to render them, what St. Paul styles *didaximous*.—It seems to be the most *insinuating* and *successful* Way both to convince and instruct. Nay, it convinces the Opponent out of his own Mouth, and makes the Pupil instruct himself. It is what the TEACHER sent from GOD practised, in those incomparable Sketches of obliging and masterly Address, The Parable of the *two Debtors*, and of the *good Samaritan*. Luke vii. 41. Luke x. 30.

\* Prov. xxxi. 10.

and cemented with a tenacious Mortar, form the convenient Abodes of Peace, and build the strongest Fortifications of War: defending Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather, and the more formidable Assaults of our Enemies. These constitute the Arches of the Bridge, which convey the Traveler, with perfect Security, over the deep and rapid Stream. These strengthen the Arms, the stupendous Arms, of the Mole; which stretch themselves far into the Ocean, break the Impetuosity of the Surge, and screen the Bark from tempestuous Seas.—These stony Treasures are comparatively *soft*, while they continue in the Bowels of the Earth; but acquire an increasing *Hardness*, when exposed to the open Air. Was this remarkable Peculiarity reversed, what Difficulties would attend the Labours of the Mason? His Materials could not be extracted from their Bed, nor fashioned for his Purpose, without infinite Toil. Were his Work completed, it could not long withstand the Fury of the Elements; but insensibly mouldering, or incessantly decaying, would elude the Expectations of the Owner; perhaps, might prove an immature Grave, instead of a durable Dwelling.

Here are various Assortments or vast *Layers of Clay*. Which however contemptible in its Appearance, is abundantly more advantageous, than the Rocks of Diamond, or the Veins of Gold. This is moulded, with great Expedition and Ease, into Vessels of any Shape, and of almost every Size. Some, so delicately *fine*, that they compose the most elegant and ornamental Furniture, for the Tea-table of a Princess. Others, so remarkably *cheap*, that they are ranged on the Shelves, and minister at the Meals, of the

the poorest Peasant. All so perfectly *neat*, that no Liquid takes the least Taint, nor the nicest Palate any Disgust, from their cleanly Services.

A Multiplicity of other valuable Stores, are locked up by Providence, in those ample Vaults. The Key of all is committed to the Management of *Industry*; with free Permission to produce each particular Species, as Necessity shall demand, or Prudence direct.

Which shall we most admire, the bountiful Heart, the liberal Hand, or the All-discerning Eye of our Great CREATOR? How observable and admirable is his *Precaution*, in removing these useful but cumbrous Wares, from the Superficies; and stowing them, in proper Repositories, beneath the Ground!—Were they scattered over the Surface of the Soil, the Earth would be *embarrassed* with the enormous Load. Our Roads would be blocked up, and scarce any Portion left free for the Operations of Husbandry.—Were they buried extremely deep, or sunk to the Center of the Globe, it would cost Us immense Pains to procure them; or rather, they would be quite *inaccessible*.—Were they uniformly spread into a Pavement for Nature; the Trees could not strike their Roots, nor the Herbs shoot their Blades, but universal *Sterility* must ensue.—Whereas, by their present Disposition, they furnish Us with a Magazine of *metallic*, without causing any Diminution of our vegetable Treasures. Fossils of every splendid and serviceable Kind enrich the *Bowels*, while Bloom and Verdure embellish the *Face* of the Earth.

So judicious is the Arrangement of this grand Edifice! So beneficent the Destination of its whole Fur-



\* Furniture! In which, all is regulated with consummate Skill, and touched into the highest Perfection. All most exactly adapted to the various Intentions of Providence, and the manifold Exigencies of Mankind: to supply *every Want*, We can feel; and gratify *every Wish*, We can form.

Insomuch that the whole System affords a favourite and exalted Topic of Praise, even to those distinguished Beings, who *stand on the Sea of Glass, and have the Harps of GOD in their Hands*. They lift their Voice and sing, *Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty* †!—And is there not Reason, my *Aspasio* would say, infinite Reason, for Us to join this triumphant Choir; and add Gratitude to our Wonder, Love to our Hallelujahs? Since all these Things are to Us, not merely Objects of Contemplation, but Sources of Accommodation: not only a majestic Spectacle, bright with the Display of our CREATOR's Wisdom, but an inestimable Gift, rich with the Emanations of his Goodness. The Earth hath He *set before* the Inhabitants of Glory,

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but

\* No Notice is taken of the *Ocean*, in this little *Roll* of Nature's Wealth; because, a distinct Sketch is given of that grand Receptacle and its principal Services, in LETTER IX.

† Rev. xv. 3. *Great and marvelous are thy Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! Just and true are thy Ways, Thou KING of Saints!* The first Part seems to mean, what the inspired Writer calls, *The Song of Moses*. The second contains, what he styles, *The Song of the LAMB*. The first, I should imagine, relates to the stupendous Works of Creation. The second alludes to the far more wonderful Scheme of Redemption. The former, describing the System of Nature, is recorded by *Moses*; the latter, comprehending the Salvation of the Saints, is accomplished by *CHRIST*.

but *the Earth hath he given to the Children of Men\**—  
Having given Us Ourselves ; given Us a World ; has  
He not a Right, a most unquestionable and unrivaled  
Right, to make that tender Demand ? *My Son, give  
me thy Heart †.*

Shall I add another Passage ? Which, viewed with  
any but the last Paragraph, will be like *the Head of  
Gold*, eminent and conspicuous on *Feet of Iron and  
Clay*. It is taken from the finest philosophical Ora-  
tion, that ever was made. I never read it, but with  
a Glow of Delight, and with Impressions of Awe.  
It is, in short, inimitably spirited and sublime.—  
You think, perhaps, I act an impolitic Part, in being  
so lavish of my Praise ; and that the Quotation must  
suffer, by such an *aggrandizing* Introduction. But  
I am under no Apprehensions of this Kind. For-  
bear to be delighted, if You can ; cease to admire, if  
You can ; When You hear OMNISCIENCE  
itself declaring, That, on the Sight of this universal  
Fabric, emerging out of Nothing, THE MORN-  
ING STARS SANG TOGETHER, AND ALL  
THE SONS OF GOD SHOUTED FOR JOY‡.—  
The System was so graceful, so magnificent, and, in  
all Respects, so exquisitely finished ; that the most  
*exalted* Intelligences were charmed, were transported.  
They knew not how to express themselves on the  
great Occasion, but in *Shouts* of Exultation, and  
*Songs* of Praise. Is it possible for Imagination to con-  
ceive an Encomium, so just, so high, so beautifully  
noble !—I am sure, after so much Delicacy, and  
Majesty of Sentiment, any Thing of mine must be  
intolerably

\* Psal. cxv. 16. † Prov. xxiii. 26. ‡ Job xxxviii. 7.

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intolerably flat; unless You will except this one Profession, that I am, with the most cordial Sincerity,

*My dear Aspasio,  
inviolably yours,*

THERON.



LETTER VII.

ASPASIO to THERON.

*My dear THERON,*

IF You write with such a View, and from such a Motive, as are mentioned in your last, expect no more *free-will* Offerings from my Pen. In this one Instance, I shall think it my Duty to be covetous. I shall act the Miser out of Principle; and hardly persuade myself to part with a single Line, till it is become an undeniable *Debt*. I must turn your own Artifice on Yourself; and lay You under a Necessity of obliging, entertaining, and edifying me by your Correspondence.

For, give me Leave to assure You, that I am always delighted, and always improved by your Epistles. They shew me a Multitude of Beauties in the Creation, which I should not otherwise have discerned. They point out the infinite Power, the unsearchable Wisdom, and the charmingly rich Goodness of the glorious MAKER. Such a Philosophy turns all Nature into a *School* of In-



struction, and is an excellent *Handmaid* to true Religion. It makes every Object a Step, better than a golden Step, to raise both our Knowledge and our Affections to the adorable and immortal CAUSE of all.

While I am roving heedlessly along, your Remarks often interpose, like some intelligent faithful Monitor, who claps his Hand upon my Breast, and says; *Stand still, and consider the wondrous Works of GOD\**.—Willingly I obey the Admonition: the *Christian* may, with peculiar Complacency, consider this grand Magazine of Wonders, this copious Store-house of Blessings; and, conscious of an Interest in *JESUS*, has a Right to call them all *his own*†. He may look round upon present Things; look forward unto future Things; and, trusting in his SAVIOUR's Merit, may confidently say—  
 “Not one only, but *both* these Worlds are mine.  
 “By Virtue of my REDEEMER's Righteousness,  
 “I possess the necessary Accommodations of this  
 “Life; and, on the same unshaken Footing, I stand  
 “intitled to the inconceivable Felicity of a better.”

Surely then it will be as pleasing an Employ, and as important a Search, to examine the *Validity* of our *Title* to future Things, as to estimate the Value of our present Possessions. *You* have executed the one, let *me* attempt the other.—You have surveyed material Nature. It appears to be a fair and stately Mansion; void of all Defect; and, for the Purposes which it is intended to answer, completely finished. Is not our SAVIOUR's Obedience, the Provision made for indigent and guilty Souls,  
 equally

\* Job xxxvii. 14.

† 1 Cor. iii. 2.



equally rich and equally perfect?—Since this is everlasting and immutable; since the other is transient and perishable; doubtless We may argue with the judicious Apostle: *If that which is to be done away, which will soon be consigned over to Dissolution, is glorious; much more that which remaineth, whose blessed Effects continue to eternal Ages is glorious* \*.

We are every One, as an unclean Thing †. Our very Nature is contaminated. Even Sanctification, though it destroys the reigning; does not wholly supersede the polluting Power of Iniquity. So that whatever Graces We exercise, whatever Duties We perform, (like the Rays of Light transmitted through coloured Glass, or like generous Wine streaming from a defiled Cask) they receive some improper Tinge, or contract some debasing Taint. But **CHRIST** was intirely free from this innate Contagion. He had no erroneous Apprehensions in his Mind, no corrupt Bias upon his Will, nor any irregular Concupiscence in his Affections.

Being thus perfectly undefiled, *He did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth* ‡. All his Thoughts were innocent, all his Words were irreproachable, and every Action blameless. The most accomplished among the Children of Men, when surprised in some unguarded Moment, or assaulted on some weak Side, have been betrayed into Error, or hurried into Sin. Even *Moses* spake unadvisedly with his Lips; and *Aaron*, the Saint of the **LORD**, warped to idolatrous Practices. *They* were like some stagnating Lake; in which, the Dregs being subsided, the Waters appear clean; but when stirred by Temptation,

C 3

or

\* 2 Cor. iii. 11.

† Isa. lxiv. 6.

‡ 1 Pet. ii. 22

or agitated by Affliction, the Sediment rises, and the Pool is discoloured. Whereas, *CHRIST* may be compared to a *Fountain*, that is all Transparency, and pure to the very Bottom; which, however shaken, however disturbed, is nothing but fluid Crystal; permanently and invariably clear.

It was a small Thing for the blessed *JESUS*, to have no depraved Propensity; He was born in a State of *consummate Rectitude*, and adorned with all the Beauties of Holiness. *HOLINESS TO THE LORD* was inscribed, not on the *Mitre*, but on the *Heart* of our great *HIGH-PRIEST*. Therefore He is styled by the Angelic Harbinger of his Birth, *THAT HOLY THING*\*. — In the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, the Dignity of our *REDEEMER*'s Nature, and the Perfection of his Obedience, are displayed by the Similitude of a *Stone*†, adorned with exquisite Engraving. Wrought, not by *Bezaleel* or *Aholiab*, though divinely inspired Artists, but by the Finger of *JEHOVAH* Himself; and more highly finished, than it is possible for human Skill to equal, or human Thought to conceive.

The  
 \* *Luke* i. 35. — Which is spoken, in *Contradistinction* to the State of all other Births; and implies the *universal* Prevalence of original Corruption, this *one* Instance only excepted. For, if other Infants were holy at their first Formation, and made after the Image of *GOD*, this Remark had been trivial and impertinent, if not droll and burlesque; like saying with great Solemnity; “The Child shall have a Mouth and a Head; eye, and Eyes in the one, and Lips to the other.”

† *Zechar.* iii. 9. *Behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one Stone shall be seven Eyes; behold! I will engrave the Graving thereof, saith the LORD of Hosts, and I will remove the Iniquity of that Land in one Day.*

The whole Tenour of our LORD's Conduct, was a living Exemplification of Piety and Morality, in their most *extensive* Branches, and most *amiable* Forms. Saints of the highest Attainments, have fallen short of the Glory of GOD; have been far from reaching the exalted Standard of his Precepts. But *CHRIST* failed in no Point, came short in no Degree.—We formerly observed the great Sublimity, and vast Extent of the divine Law. From whence appears the extreme Difficulty, nay the utter Impossibility of our Justification, on Account of any Duties performed by ourselves. How should we rejoice then to contemplate the vicarious Righteousness of our condescending and adorable SURETY? As the Mercy-seat was exactly commensurate to the Dimensions of the Ark; so did our LORD's Obedience most *fully quadrate* with all and every Demand of the divine Law. It flowed from those best of Principles, supreme Love to GOD, and unfeigned Affection to Mankind.

From these two capital Sources, let Us trace our LORD's Obedience, through some little Part of its illustrious Progress.—His Delight in GOD was conspicuous, even from his *early Years*. The sacred Solemnities of the Sanctuary, were more engaging to his youthful Mind, than all the Entertainments of a Festival.—When He entered upon his Ministry, *whole Nights* were not too long for his copious Devotions. The lonely Retirements of the Desert, as affording Opportunity for undisturbed Communion with GOD, were more desirable to *CHRIST*, than the Applauses of an admiring World.



So ceaseless and transcendent was his Love to GOD, that He never sought any separate Pleasure of his own; but always did those Things, which were pleasing in his FATHER's Sight. His own Will was intirely absorpt in the Will of the MOST HIGH; and *it was his Meat and Drink*, refreshing and delightful as the richest Food, or as royal Dainties, *to finish the Work that was given Him to do* \*.

So intirely devoted to the Honour of GOD, that a Zeal for his House, and for the Purity of his Ordinances, is represented by the evangelical Historian, as *eating Him up* †. Like a heavenly Flame, glowing in his Breast, it sometimes fired Him with a graceful Indignation; sometimes melted Him into godly Sorrow; and, by exerting itself in a Variety of vigorous Efforts, consumed his vital Spirits.

So active and unremitted was the Obedience of the blessed JESUS, that the Sun did not enter upon his Race with a more constant Assiduity, nor dispatch his Business with greater Expedition: and sure I am, that radiant Luminary never dispensed Beams, half so bright, or a thousandth Part so beneficial.—Short was his Span, but how grand and extensive were his Services. So *grand*, that they bring more Glory to GOD, than all the Administrations of Providence, and all the Phenomena of Nature. So *extensive*, that they spread, in their gracious Efficacy, to the Ends of the Earth, and to the closing Period of Time. Nay, they will diffuse their blessed Influence even to the celestial World, and have no other

\* John iv. 34.

† John ii. 17.



other Limits of their Duration than the Ages of Eternity.

Most affectionately concerned for the Welfare of Mankind, He spent his Strength, not barely in relieving them, when his Aid was implored; but in *seeking* the Afflicted, and *offering* his Assistance. With great Fatigue \*, He traveled to remote Cities; and with no less Condescension, He visited the meanest Villages; that All might have the Benefit and Comfort of his Presence. Though Multitudes of miserable Objects were brought to Him from every Quarter, yet he was pleased even to prevent the Wishes of the Distressed, and *went about doing Good*.

He gave Sight †, and all the agreeable Scenes of Nature, to the Blind; Health, and all the choice Com-

\* JESUS being weary with his Journey, καθέζετο εως. John iv. 6.—εως is thus explained by a Greek Commentator, απλως, & ως ελuchs. Our LORD sat down, without Ceremony and without Complaint, even on the rough Place: contented to use it, just as He found it; neither desiring a softer Seat, nor wishing for any better Accommodation.—I rather think, the Adverb refers to the preceding Adjective *κεκοπιακως*, which signifies a State of very great Fatigue; weakening a Person to such a Degree, that He can hardly walk with steady Steps, or even sit in an upright Attitude. The sacred Historian seems to mean, that our LORD sat in such a Posture, as spoke the Lassitude of his Body; declared the Failure of his Spirits; and *showed* Him to be spent with the Heat of the Day; and the Toil of Traveling. Which Circumstance gives a most beautiful Heightening to his Charity and Zeal, so generously and so successfully exerted in the following Conference.

† Εχαρισάτο το βλέπειν, is the delicate and noble Expression of the Evangelist, Luke vii. 21. *He made them a Present of Sight*. Silver and Gold had He none; but these were his Gifts; such were his Alms.

Comforts of Life, to the Diseased. He expelled malevolent raging Dæmons; and restored, what is more precious than the Light of the Body, or the Vigour of the Constitution, the calm Possession of the intellectual Faculties.—What *greatly surpassed* all the preceding Blessings, He released the wretched Soul from the Dominion of Darkness, and from the Tyranny of Sin. He made his Followers Partakers of a divine Nature, and prepared them for a State of never-ending Bliss.

Such priceless Treasures of Wisdom and Beneficence flowed from his Tongue, and were poured from his Hands!—How different these Triumphs of Mercy, from the Trophies erected, by wild Ambition, in the bloody Field! If *Heathens* celebrated, those mighty Butchers, who made Cities their Slaughter-house; made half the Globe their Shambles; and measured their Merit, by the Devastations they spread; how should *Christians* admire this heavenly BENEFACTOR, who rose upon a wretched World, with Healing under his Wings! Who distributed, far and near, the unspeakably rich Gifts of Knowledge and Holiness, of temporal Happiness and eternal Joy!

Not were these righteous Acts his strange Work, but his repeated, his hourly, his almost incessant Employ. Sometimes, We hear him preaching in the Temple, or publishing his glad Tidings in the Synagogues! Sometimes, We see him teaching in private Houses, or bringing forth the good Things of his Gospel on the Deck of a Ship. At other Times, He takes a Mountain for his Pulpit; the Heavens are his sounding-board; and all that have Ears to hear, are

are invited to be his Audience.—Does He lay aside this solemn Office? It is only to carry on the same Design, in a more condescending and *familiar* Manner. If He meets with the *Pharisees*, He discovers their Errors, and reproveth their Vices; He confutes their Objections, and (in case they are not absolutely inaccessible to wise Counsel) rectifies their Mistakes. If He vouchsafes to be present at a Feast, He furnishes the richest, incomparably the richest Part of the Treat. *Honey and Milk are under his Tongue* \*. He inculcates Lowliness of Mind on the Vain †; He recommends disinterested Charity to the Selfish ‡; and promises Pardon to the weeping Penitent §.—Is He retired from *other* Company, and surrounded only by his chosen Attendants? His Conversation is a Sermon. Whether He sit in the inner Chamber, or travel on the public Road, or walk through the Cornfields, He is still prosecuting his great Work; training up his Disciples for their sacred Function; and imparting to them, what they may communicate to Others.—Is He retired from *all* Company? Even then He does not discontinue his Labours of Love, but adds the fervent Intercessions of the Night, to the charitable Toils of the Day. Yes, when all but Himself, lay sunk in soft Repose, this ADVOCATE for a guilty World, was engaged in an Exercise of Benevolence; which, though secret and unobserved as the falling Dews, was far more beneficial to our best Interests, than those pearly Drops to the languishing Herbs.

Most  
\* Cant. iv. 11. † Luke xiv. 8. ‡ Luke xiv. 12.  
§ Luke vii. 48.



Most charming and unparalleled Benignity! He forgot his daily Food, neglected his necessary Rest, to spend and be spent for the Salvation of Mankind. Neither the Hardships of continual Self-denial, nor the Calumnies of invenomed Tongues, could divert Him from pursuing this favourite Business. — He sought none of your Honours, coveted none of your Rewards, O ye Children of Men! What *He* sought, what *He* coveted, was, to wear out his Life in your Service, and lay it down for your Ransom. This was all his Desire, and this indeed He desired earnestly. — He longed (beneficent, blessed BEING!) He longed for the fatal Hour. He severely rebuked one of his Disciples, who would have dissuaded Him from going as a Voluntier to the Cross. He was even *straitened* \*, under a Kind of holy Uneasiness, till the dreadful Work was accomplished; till He was baptised with the Baptism of his Sufferings, bathed in Blood, and plunged in Death.

By this most meritorious Obedience and Death, what did He not *deserve*? What did He not *procure*? He procured those inestimable Blessings, the Pardon of

of all our Sins, and the eternal reward of this Sin,

\* Luke xii. 50. The original Word *συναχμαί* seems to express the Condition of a Person, wedged in, on every Side, by a tumultuous Throng of People. His Hands are hampered, and his Body is confined in a moving Prison: He is crushed, and hurried to and fro: He pants for Breath, and is almost stifled in the Croud. — How must such a One long to be *disengaged* from these *very uneasy* Circumstances! With equal Ardour did our most beneficent LORD desire those Sufferings, which were to overwhelm Him with Distress, but exalt *Us* to Happiness; were to bathe his Limbs in Blood, but cleanse our Souls from Sin. — Οι οχλοι, says the same Historian, *συναχμαί σι κ' αποθνήσκει*, Luke viii. 45.

Sin, and Reconciliation with GOD. Procured them (O! Love unmerited and unmeasurable!) for Prodigals, for Traitors, for Rebels.—To this it is owing, that We, who were Enemies against GOD, may call the KING of Heaven our Father; may have free Access to Him in all our Difficulties; and may hope to reign with Him in everlasting Glory.

Was ever Goodness like this Goodness \*? Were ever Blessings comparable to these Blessings? or purchased with such a Price?—Hide, hide, your diminished Heads, ye little transitory Donations of Silver and Gold. The Riches of a thousand Mines, bestowed to feed the Hungry and clothe the Naked, are the most contemptible Trifles, if mentioned with the Charity of the *teaching*, the *healing*, the *bleeding* JESUS. Kingdoms given away in Alms, if viewed with this infinitely noble Beneficence, would make just the same Figure, as a Spark from the Summer-hearth,

\* Codrus, it is true, devoted Himself to Death for the Athenians; and Curtius threw Himself into the yawning Gulf, for the Preservation of the Romans.—But these died, being *mere* Creatures, and *guilty* Creatures: whereas, the dying JESUS was perfectly innocent, and supremely glorious.—These died, only a *little before* their Time: but CHRIST died, though He had Life in Himself, and None could have taken it from Him, had He not voluntarily resigned it.—These died for their valuable *Friends*, for their affectionate *Relations*, for their native *Country*: but CHRIST died for *Slaves*, for *Enemies*, for the *Ungodly*.—They died an *honourable* Death: but CHRIST submitted to the most *ignominious* Execution; CHRIST died under the Imputation of *horrid* Crimes, and in the Form of an *execrable* Malefactor.—In all these Instances, as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so is CHRIST's Love greater than their Love; his *Philanthropy* than their *Patriotism*.

hearth, under the potent and boundless Blaze of Noon.—This is indeed *Love that passeth Knowledge* \*.

Amidst all these Miracles of Power and of Love, (any one of which would have intitled Him to universal Admiration, and everlasting Honour) how *humble* was our SAVIOUR! O Humility—Virtue dear to the most High GOD, and peculiarly amiable in Men—never didst Thou appear in so charming a Dress, or so striking a Light.

At his Birth, not accommodated with a magnificent *Palace*, but lodged in a Stable, and laid in a Manger.—As He advanced in Years, not attended with a *royal* Equipage, or supplied from a *royal* Revenue; but labouring with his own Hands, and earning his Bread by the Sweat of his Brow.—When He entered upon his ministerial Office, not the least ostentatious *Parade* appeared, in the Performance of all his wonderful Works. So far, so very far from affecting the Acclamations of the Populace, that He often imposed Silence on those unspeakably indebted Lips, which

\* *Eph. iii. 19.* This Expression, as also the principal Circumstance of Superiority hinted in the preceding Note, are founded on the *Divinity* of our LORD. And indeed the Expression is scarce justifiable, the Assertion is hardly true, upon any other Supposition. A Creature dying for a Creature, is, though great, yet not *incomprehensible* Goodness. But, when We view the Sufferings of CHRIST, and the Blessings of Redemption surrounded with all the Splendor of the DEITY; they dazzle our Understanding, and fill Us with holy Astonishment. They appear to be the Effects of a Love, never to be spoke of but in the Language of *Wonder*, never to be thought of but with an Extasy of *Delight*.



which were ready to overflow with Praise, and would fain have been the Trumpets of his Fame.

Though a Voice from Heaven proclaimed Him, The BELOVED of his Almighty FATHER; He disdained not to own the ignoble Character of the Carpenter's Son\*. Though PRINCE of the Kings of the Earth, He condescended to wash the Feet of mean Fishermen, and vile Sinners†. Though PROPRIETOR and LORD of the whole World, He was content to be more destitute than the Fowls of the Air, or the Foxes of the Desert‡; more destitute (astonishing Abasement!) than the most insignificant and most hated Animals.

Grandeur, We find, is apt to beget Expectations of superior Regard: consequently, gives a keener Edge to every Affront, and renders the Mind more tenderly sensible of every Disrespect. But our LORD's Meekness was as great as his Dignity; and that, throughout a Series of such unsufferable Provocations, as were equaled by nothing, but the Sweetness of his forgiving Grace.

When rudely affronted, He calmly bore, and kindly overlooked the Insult.—When contradicted by petulant and presumptuous Sinners, He endured, with the utmost Serenity of Temper, their unreasonable Cavils, and their obstinate Perverseness.—When his Invitations, his most endearing Invitations, were ungratefully and stubbornly rejected; instead of remitting, He renewed them; and, with still warmer Affection, importuned his Hearers, not to forsake their own Mercies, nor to forego their own Felicity.—When all the winning Arts of Persuasion were ineffectual,

\* Matt. xiii. 55. † John xiii. 14. ‡ Matt. viii. 20.

effectual, He added his Tears to his slighted Intreaties; and lamented as a Brother, when scornfully repulsed as a Teacher.

Though *his Disciples* slept, stupidly slept, when his bitter Cries pierced the Clouds, and were enough to awaken the very Stones into Compassion; did their divine but slighted MASTER resent the Unkindness? Did he refuse to admit an Excuse for their Neglect? Yea, He made their Excuse; and that the most tender and gracious imaginable; *The Spirit is willing, but the Flesh is weak* \*.—When *his Enemies* had nailed Him to the Cross, as the basest Slave, and most flagitious Malefactor; when they were glutting their Malice, with his Torments and Blood; and spared not to revile Him, even in his last expiring Agonies; far, very far from being exasperated, this HERO of Heaven repaid all their Contempt and Barbarity, with the most fervent and effectual Supplications in their Behalf. *FATHER, forgive them,* was his Prayer: *for, they know not what they do* †, was his Plea.

Nor was his *Resignation* less exemplary than his Meekness. He went out to meet Afflictions, when they came in his FATHER's Name, and commissioned from his FATHER's Hand. He gave, without the least Reluctance, his Back to the Smiters, and hid not his Face from Shame and Spitting. Though his Soul, his very Soul was penetrated with the keenest Sensations of Anguish; yet, no impatient Thought discomposed his Mind, no murmuring Word forced its Way from his Lips. *FATHER, not my Will, but thine be done* ‡, was his Language; when

\* Matt. xxvi. 41.  
xxii. 42.

† Luke xxiii. 34.

‡ Luke

when the Sorrows of Death compassed Him, and Pains, inexpressibly severer than the Pains of Dissolution, came upon Him. *When they gaped upon him with their Mouth, and smote Him upon the Cheek reproachfully. When his Face was foul with Spitting, and on his Eyelids was the Shadow of Death. When GOD delivered Him to the Ungodly, and turned Him over into the Hands of the Wicked. Yea, when the ALMIGHTY set him for the Mark of his Arrows, and brake Him with Breach upon Breach. When the Weapons of his Wrath cleft his very Reins asunder, and poured his Gall upon the Earth* \*. Amidst all this exquisite Distress, He sinned not by the least irregular Perturbation; but bowed his Head, and dutifully kissed the divine Rod, and cordially blessed his very Murderers.

Thus did the whole Choir of *active* and *passive* Virtues abound and shine in our LORD: abound with the richest Variety, and shine with the highest Lustre. Infinitely surpassing that curious Assemblage of costly Gems, which studded the *Aaronic* Breastplate †; and, as far as earthly Things can represent heavenly, typified the Splendor and Perfection of our REDEEMER's Righteousness.

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In

\* These tragical Images are borrowed from the Book of *Job*, who was an eminent Type of a suffering SAVIOUR; and, though they are the very Eloquence of Woe, they do not exaggerate, they cannot express, that inconceivable Anguish; which wrung a bloody Sweat from our blessed MASTER's Body, and forced from his Lips that melancholy Exclamation—*My Soul is sorrowful—exceeding sorrowful—sorrowful even unto Death.* See *Job* xvi.

† Exod. xxviii. 17, 18, 19, 20.



In all this, He acted and He suffered, as GOD's *righteous Servant*, and as his People's *righteous Surety*.—By all this, He fulfilled every Jot and Tittle of the divine Law; nay, He more than fulfilled, He *magnified* it. He gave it (if I may apply the most beautiful Allusion that ever was used, to the most momentous Subject that ever was discussed) *good Measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over* \*.

He defied the most vigilant of his Enemies to convince him of Sin.—A more malignant, a far more sagacious Adversary than the Scribes and Pharisees, could detect no Blemish in our *LORD JESUS*. *The Prince of this World*, that infernal Tyrant, who had deceived and enslaved all the Nations of the Earth, *came and found nothing in Him* †; not the least Corruption in his Nature, not the least Defect in his Obedience.

*He hath done all Things well* ‡, was the general Acclamation of Mankind: or, as the Words may be rendered, He hath done all Things *finely* and *gracefully* ||. With every Circumstance, that can constitute the Propriety and Dignity, the Utility and Beauty of Action.

*I have glorified Thee on Earth* §, was his own Profession before the most High GOD. I have glorified Thee, in all that I acted, in all that I uttered, in all that I suffered. I have displayed the Magnificence of thy Majesty, the Riches of thy Grace, and the Honour of *all* thy Attributes. Insomuch, that *who so seeth ME, seeth the FATHER* ¶; whoever is properly acquainted with my Person and my

\* Luke vi. 38. † John xiv. 30. ‡ Mark vii. 37.  
 || Καλως. § John xvii. 4. ¶ John xii. 45.

my Work of Redemption, sees the invisible and knows the incomprehensible DEITY; sees his venerable, his amiable, his adorable Perfections, in the clearest Mirror, and in the brightest Light \*.

GOD also, who is the supreme Standard and unerring Judge of Excellency, bore his Testimony to our blessed MEDIATOR. He spoke it once, yea twice, and with a Voice from Heaven.—In the Constitution of the material World, when it came forth from the CREATOR's Hand, Omniscience itself could discern no Flaw. Neither could Justice itself, upon the strictest Inquiry, discover any Failure in the Obedience of our SURETY. As therefore it was said, concerning the Works of Creation, *They are all very good* †; So it was said, concerning our SAVIOUR, and by the same Almighty MAJESTY, *In Him I am well pleased* ‡.

You took Notice, and very justly, how much the Productions of Nature exceed and eclipse the Attempts of human Skill. We are pleased with the Performances of the Painter; but do they equal the native Blush of the Rose, or the artless Glow of a Pea-blossom? We are charmed with a fine Piece of Enameling; but is it fit to be compared with the natural Polish, of a thousand Shells which are formed in the Ocean, or a thousand Seeds which spring from the Earth? We admire the Virtues of the

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antient

\* Therefore CHRIST is said to be *απαύλασμα τῆς δόξης*, Heb. i. 3. In other Objects, We have only some obscure Footsteps, or dim Traces; here We have the whole Glory of the GODHEAD. And not barely the Glory, but the very Brightness of the FATHER's Glory; or, all the divine Perfections beaming forth with adequate, that is, with ineffable and infinite Splendor.

† Gen. i. 31.

‡ Matt. iii. 17.

antient Saints; Men “ that were honoured in their  
 “ Generation, and the Glory of their Times\*.”  
 We admire the Meekness of *Moses*, and the Mag-  
 nanimity of *Elijah*; the exalted Piety of *Isaiah*, and  
 the enlarged Wisdom of *Daniel*; the active Spirit of  
*Joshua*, and the passive Graces of *Jeremiah*. But  
 what Proportion, put them all together—what Pro-  
 portion do they all bear to HIS Obedience, *who is*  
*gone into Heaven, Angels and Authorities and Powers*  
*being made subject unto Him†?* Who is called the  
 HOLY ONE and the JUST‡; not only by  
 way of Emphasis, but by way of Exclusion. Because,  
 no Person is worthy of the Character, no Duties de-  
 serve to be mentioned, when CHRIST and his  
 Merits are under Consideration.

If then We talk of Merit, what *Merit* must there  
 be in such immaculate Sanctity of Soul, and such  
 exemplary Holiness of Conduct; such ardent Zeal  
 for GOD, and such compassionate Good-will to  
 Man; such consummate-Worthiness, and extensive  
 Usefulness? Such as were utterly unknown before;  
 have been absolutely unequalled since; and never will,  
 nor can be paralleled, throughout all Ages!—O my  
*Theron!* What is the Drop of a Bucket to the un-  
 fathomable Waves of the Ocean? What is a Grain  
 of Sand to the unmeasurable Dimensions of the Uni-  
 verse? What is an Hour or a *Moment* to the endless  
 Revolutions of Eternity? Such are all human En-  
 dowments, and all human Attainments, compared  
 with HIS Righteousness, who is *fairer than the*  
*Children of Men*§; *the chiefest among ten thousand*¶;  
*and who received not the SPIRIT by Measure*¶.

Think

\* Eccclus. xlv. 7.    † 1 Pet. iii. 22.    ‡ Acts iii. 14.  
 ¶ Psal. xlv. 2.    § Cantic. v. 10.    ¶ John iii. 34.



Think not, that what I have written is the Language of Rant. It is a Paraphrase, though, I must confess, but a scanty Paraphrase, on *David's Practice* and *David's Faith*. *My Mouth shall shew forth thy Righteousness and thy Salvation all the Day\**, for I know

\* *Psal. lxxi. 15.* I cannot but observe, that *Righteousness* and *Salvation* are frequently connected, by the Author of the *Psalms*, and by the Prophet *Isaiah*. In order to intimate, that the one is founded on the other; the latter derives its Origin from the former; there can be no Salvation without a Righteousness, a real, proper, *Law-fulfilling* Righteousness.—At the same Time, I am sensible, that the Word Righteousness may signify GOD's Goodness in making, and Faithfulness in performing, his Promises unto *David*. Salvation may likewise denote the Delivery of that afflicted Hero from all his Persecutors, and his Establishment on the Throne of *Israel*.

But if We should confine the Sense to these narrow Limits, how *comfortless* the Favour even to *David* Himself, considered as an immortal Being! How much more *insignificant* to Us and others, on whom the Ends of the World are come! And how very *unworthy* of that infinite GOD, who is the Father of the Spirits of all Flesh; who sees, at one View, whatever is, or has been, or shall exist; who therefore, when He speaks, speaks to all his Children, in every Period of Time, and in every Nation under Heaven. As much as a Tutor, when delivering his Lectures, addresses Himself to all his Pupils, whether they sit at his Right-hand or his left, before Him or on every Side.

Whereas, if Righteousness signifies the meritorious Obedience of *CHRIST*, and Salvation implies the Benefits of his Redemption, the Sense is no longer shriveled, impoverished, and mean; but *rich, august, and magnificent*. It pours Consolation among all People, Kindreds, and Tongues. It is worthy of that GOD, who seeth the Things, and regardeth the Persons, which are not as though they were. It comports exactly with that Revelation,

*know not the Numbers thereof.* The glorious Righteousness of *CHRIST*, and the great Salvation obtained thereby, He declares, shall be the chosen, the principal Subject of his Discourse. And not on a Sabbath only, but on *every* Day of the Week, of the Year, of his Life. And not barely at the stated Returns of solemn Devotion, but in every social Interview, and *all the Day long*.—Why will He thus dwell, perpetually and invariably dwell, on this darling Theme? Because, *He knew no End thereof*. It is impossible to measure the Value, or exhaust the Fullness of these Blessings. The Righteousness is unspeakable, the Salvation is everlasting. To compute the Duration of the One, Numbers fail; to describe the Excellency of the Other, Words are at a loss.

And is this Righteousness designed for *Us*? Is this to be our Wedding-dress, this our beautiful Array, when We enter the Regions of Eternity? Unspeakable Privilege!—Is this what *GOD* has provided to supply, more than supply our Loss in *Adam*! Boundless Benignity!—Shall *We* be treated by the Judge of the World, as if We had performed all this unfinning and perfect Obedience? Well might the Prophet cry out, like One lost in Astonishment, *How great is his Goodness*!—Is not your Heart enamoured, my dear *Theron*, with a View of this incom-

com-  
velation, in which *CHRIST* is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the Ending, the Sum total.

This Note is already too long; otherwise I should take leave to gratify my Inclination, and give a Sanction to my Sentiment, by transcribing *Vitringa's* Exposition of *Isa.* xlv. 8.

comprehensibly rich Grace? What so excellent, what so comfortable, what so desirable, as this Gift of a SAVIOUR's Righteousness? Though delineated by this *feeble* Pen, methinks, it has Dignity and Glory enough, to captivate our Hearts and fire our Affections: fire them with ardent and inextinguishable Desires after a personal Interest and Propriety in it.—O! may the Eternal SPIRIT reveal our REDEEMER's Righteousness, in all its heavenly Beauty and divine Lustre! Then, I am sure, We shall esteem it above *every Thing*; We shall regard it as the *One Thing* needful; We shall count *all Things* in Comparison of it, worthless as the Chaff, and empty as the Wind.

To an immortal and fallen Soul, every Thing else is empty as the Wind; but here Sinners may *suck, and be satisfied with this Breast of Consolations*: yea Thousands and Thousands of Millions may *milk out, and be delighted with the Abundance of its Glory*\*.—Here we shall find the Doctrine of *Supererogation*, no longer a Chimera, but a delightful Reality. Here indeed is an immense Surplusage, an inexhaustible Fund of Merit†, sufficient to enrich a whole World of indigent and miserable Creatures: sufficient to

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make

\* Isa. lxvi. 11.

† Yet here is no *rich Fund* (as a learned Writer asserts) no Fund at all, *for the Pope's Treasury of meritorious supererogating Actions*: unless CHRIST and the Pope are to be placed upon the same Footing; unless the ineffably excellent Obedience of a Divine REDEEMER, and the miserably defective Duties of sinful Men, are to be deemed equally valuable.—Since this will hardly be admitted by Protestants; I believe, *Aspasio* may safely call the Obedience of CHRIST, *The true Supererogation*; as Mr. Ambrose has called the Blood of CHRIST, *The true Purgatory*.

make their Cup run over with a superabundant Fullness of Peace and Joy, so long as Time shall last, and when Time shall be no more. For, to use the Apostle's weighty Argument, *If by one Man's Offence, Death reigned by one; much more they which receive Abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life by one, JESUS CHRIST\**. If one Offence, committed by one mere Man, made all his Posterity chargeable with Guilt, and liable to Death: HOW MUCH MORE shall the manifold Instances of our Divine REDEEMER's Obedience; of his long, uninterrupted, consummate Righteousness;—how much more shall they absolve all his People from Condemnation and Punishment, and intitle them to the Honours and Joys of Immortality!

Which will appear in a clearer Light, if, to the Perfection of his Obedience, We add the *Majesty* of his *Person*. A proper Subject this, for some future Letter.—In the mean Time, let me desire my Friend, the Friend of my Bosom, to contemplate our *LORD JESUS* under that lovely and august Character, *GLORIOUS IN HOLINESS†*. And for my Part, I will not cease to pray, that a Sense of this supereminently grand and precious Righteousness may be written on my *Theron's* Heart.—On those living Tables, may it be like Figures cut on a Rock of solid Marble, or inscribed on the Bark of a growing Tree: be *lasting* in its Duration as the former, and *spreading* in its Influence as the latter. —It will then be a sure Proof, that his Name is written

\* Rom. v. 17.

† Exod. xv. 11.



written in the Book of Life ; and it shall then be  
a pleasing Pattern for

*the Affection,*

*the Gratitude,*

*and the Friendship, of*

*his ASPASIO.*

P. S. You give a most astonishing Account of the  
*Pressure* of the Atmosphere. Astonishing in-  
deed ! That we should be continually sur-  
rounded, continually overwhelmed, with such  
a tremendous Load ; and not be crushed to  
death, no, nor be sensible of the least  
Weight.—This, I think, may serve to re-  
present the State of a Sinner, *unawakened*  
from carnal Security. Loads, more than  
*mountainous Loads* of Guilt, are upon his Soul,  
and He perceives not the Burden. For this  
Reason, He is under no Apprehensions of the  
Vengeance and fiery Indignation, which He  
deserves ; He has no superlative Esteem for  
the Atonement and Merits of the RE-  
DEEMER, which alone can deliver Him  
from the Wrath to come. But, if once his  
Conscience *feels*, what his Lips, perhaps, have  
often repeated ; “ We do earnestly repent Us  
“ of these our Misdoings ; the Remembrance  
“ of them is grievous unto Us, the Burden of  
“ them is intolerable ;” then how will He  
prize such a Text : *The LORD laid on*  
*CHRIST the Iniquity of Us all !* How will  
He long for an Interest in the LAMB of  
GOD,

GOD, which taketh away the Sin of the World! Then, that JESUS who has finished the Transgression, and brought in everlasting Righteousness, will be all his Salvation, and all his Desire.



## LETTER VIII.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

I HAVE just been reading that exquisitely fine Piece of sacred History, *The Life of Joseph*. A History—filled with surprising Incidents, and unexpected Revolutions—adorned with the most heroic Instances of triumphant Virtue, both amidst the Allurements of Temptation, and under the Pressures of Affliction—animated with such tender and pathetic, such melting and alarming Touches of natural Eloquence, as every Reader must feel, and every true Critic will admire.

When I came to that remarkable Injunction, with which the generous Viceroy dismissed his Brethren; *Ye shall tell my Father of all my Glory in Egypt*\*—I paused—I pondered—I was struck. Certainly, this was enjoined, not by way of Ostentation; but on Account of the Pleasure, which, He knew, it would yield the good old Patriarch.—Was it some kind prompt-

\* Gen. xlv. 13.

prompting Angel, or the Voïce of Gratitude and Devotion, that whispered in my Ear? “ Should not  
 “ the Children of Men likewise tell one another of  
 “ *all the Glory*\*, which their REDEEMER  
 “ possesses in Heaven and on Earth? Will not this  
 “ afford them the sublimest Pleasure Here, and be a  
 “ Source of the most refined Satisfaction for ever  
 “ and ever?”

Though I had almost determined to write no more, till You could make a Demand, upon the Foot of *Value received*; willingly I recede from my intended Resolution, and obey this pleasing Hint.— But *who can declare the noble Acts of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, or shew forth all his Praise?* —However, if I may but *lisp out* his adorable Name, and present my Friend with a *Glimpse*, or a *broken View* of his divine Perfections, even this will be

\* *To see the Glory of CHRIST, is the grand Blessing, which our LORD solicits and demands for his Disciples, in his last solemn Intercession. John xvii. 24. It is that, which will complete the Blessedness of Heaven; and fill its Inhabitants with Joy unspeakable and glorious. —Surely, then, We should endeavour to anticipate, in some Degree, that celestial Bliss; and habituate our Souls to this sacred Exercise, which will be our Business and our Reward to endless Ages.*

Should the Reader desire Assistance in this important Work, I would refer Him to a little Treatise of Dr. Owen's, intitled, *Meditations on the Glory of CHRIST*:— 'Tis little in Size, not so in Value. Was I to speak of it, in the classical Style, I should call it, *aureus, gemmeus, mellitus*. But I would rather say, it is richly replenished with that *Unction from the HOLY ONE*, which tends to enlighten the Eyes, and chear the Heart; which sweetens the Enjoyments of Life, softens the Horrors of Death, and prepares for the Fruitions of Eternity.

be desirable and delightful. Far more desirable and delightful, than to behold *Rome* in its Magnificence, *St. Paul* in the Pulpit, or King *Solomon* on his Throne\*.

Let me take the *Lark* for my Pattern; which, as I was lately returning from an Evening Ramble, attracted my Observation.—Warbling her CREATOR's Praise, she mounted in the serene Sky. Still she warbled, and still she mounted, as though she meant to carry her Tribute of Harmony unto the very Gates of Heaven. Having reached, at last, her highest Elevation, and perceiving herself at an immense Distance from the starry Mansions, she dropped on a sudden to the Earth; and discontinued, at once, both to sing, and to soar. Now the Morning appears, and is awakening the World, our little Songster returns her Throat, and re-exerts her Wings.—As I have endeavoured, very imperfectly endeavoured, to strike out a shadowy Draught of our LORD's complete Obedience; I would, though unequal to the Task, once more resume my Pen, and attempt—nothing like a Display, but only a faint *Sketch* of his essential Dignity.

First let me observe, that for some Time past, We have been visited with the most uncomfortable Weather; *dewless Nights*, and *sultry Days*. The Firmament was more like a glowing Furnace, than the Region of refreshing Rain.—The Earth lay parched with Thirst, and chapped with Heat. The Meadows were drained of their Humidity, and all the

\* These, if I remember right, are the three Things, which *St. Augustine* declared, would, of all others, most eminently gratify his *Curiosity*.



the Flowers hung their fading Heads.—The Streams, which used to flow parallel with the verdant Margin, abandoned their Banks; and sunk, diminished and discoloured, to the Bottom of their oozy Channels.—Nature in general seemed to be resigning the “Robe of Beauty, for the Garment of Heaviness.” Drought was in all our Borders; and *Famine*, We feared, was not far behind.—Though Clouds of Dust, obscured the Air; tarnished the Hedges; and almost smothered the Traveler: yet not one Cloud of *fleecy White* appeared, to variegate the blue Expanse, or give Us Hopes of a reviving Shower\*.

It reminded me of that awful Threatening, denounced by *Moses* on a wicked People; *The Heaven, that is over thy Head, shall be Brass; and the Earth, that is under Thee, shall be Iron* †.—It made me apprehensive of that terrible State, which the Prophet so emphatically describes; *The Field is wasted, and the Land mourneth. The Seed is rotten under the Clods, and the Harvest perisheth. The Garners are laid desolate, and the Barns are broken down.—The new Wine is dried up; the Oil languisheth; and all the Trees of the Field are withered.—How do the Beasts groan! The Herds of Cattle are perplexed. Yea, the Flocks of Sheep*  
are

\* At such a Juncture, how pertinent is the Question, proposed by the Almighty MAJESTY? *Job xxxviii. 37, 38. Who can number, muster or arrange, the Clouds in Wisdom?* So as to have them ready at hand, on any Emergency. *And who can empty those Bottles of Heaven, in copious but seasonable Effusions upon the Earth? When, as in the Case described above, the Dust of the Roads is attenuated into Powder, בצקת למוצק and the Clods of the Valley are glued fast together, ידבקו*

† Deut. xxviii. 23.

*are made desolate. Because the Rivers of Waters are dried up, and the Fire hath devoured the Pastures of the Wilderness* \*.—But, blessed be the Divine PROVIDENCE, our Fears are vanished, and a most joyful Change has taken place. The LORD hath sent a gracious Rain upon his Inheritance, and refreshed it, when it was weary †.

Yesterday in the Afternoon, the Wind shifting to the South, roused the *dormant* Clouds, and brought some of those agreeable Strangers on its Wings.—At first, they came sailing in small, and thin, and scattered Parties. Anon, the flying Squadrons advanced in larger Detachments, more *closely* wedged, and more *deeply* laden. Till at last, the great Rendezvous completed, they formed into a Body of such Depth, and extended their Wings with such a Sweep, as darkened the Sun, and overspread the whole Hemisphere.

Just at the Close of Day, the Gales which escorted the spongy Treasures, retired; and consigned their Charge to the Disposal of a profound *Calm*. Not a Breeze shook the most tremulous Leaf. Not a Curl ruffled the smooth expansive Lake. All Things were still, as in *attentive Expectation*. The Earth seemed to gasp after the hovering Moisture. Naturee, with her suppliant Tribes, in expressive pleading Silence, solicited the falling Fruitfulness. Nor pleaded long, nor solicited in vain.

The *Showers*, gentle, soft, and balmy, descend. The Vessels of Heaven unload their precious Freight, and enrich the penurious Glebe. Through all the Night, the liquid Sweetness, incomparably  
more

\* Joel i. 10, &c.

† Psal. lxxviii. 9.

more beneficial than trickling Silver, distils; shedding Herbs, and Fruits, and Flowers.—Now the Sun, *mild and refulgent*, issues through the Portals of the East. Pleased, as it were, to have emerged from the late aggravated Darkness, He looks abroad, with peculiar Gaiety, and the most engaging Splendors. He looks through the disburdened Air, and finds a gladdened World, that wants nothing but his *all-chearing* Beams, to render its Satisfaction complete.

*The Glory comes!—Hail to thy rising Ray,  
Great Lamp of Light, and second Source of Day!  
Who robe the World, each nipping Gale remove,  
Treat every Sense, and beam creating Love \*.*

At his auspicious Approach, the freshened Mountains lift their Heads, and smile. The Garden opens its aromatic Stores; and breathes, as from a fuming Altar, Balm to the Smell, and Incense to the Skies. The little Hills, crowned with springing Plenty, *clap their Hands* on every Side. The moistened Plains, and irriguous Valleys, *laugh and sing*. While their Waters, lately exhausted, again *are made deep*, and *their Rivers run like Oil* †.

The whole Earth, *saturated* with the Bounty of Heaven, and *flushed* with humid Life, wears a thousand Marks of Gratitude and Complacency. Washed by the copious Rain, how bright and vivid is the universal Verdure! The *green Carpet* below, may almost

\* These beautiful Lines are borrowed from the SEAPIECE, Canto IV. A narratory, philosophical, and descriptive Poem, written by my ingenious Friend, Dr. Kirkpatrick.

† Ezek. xxxii. 14.

almost vie with the *blue Canopy* above.—The Forest, and every Tree, burnish their Colours, and array themselves in their finest Apparel. Which as on a Day of general Festivity, is delicately decked with Gems: Gems of un sullied Lustre, and of genial Moisture.—From every Pasture, and from all the Grove, the Voice of *Pleasure* and of *Melody* resounds. While the officious Zephyrs waft the floating Harmony, blended with native Perfumes; gently waft them to the Senses, and touch the very Soul with Transport.

Could there be a more brilliant Appearance, or more exuberant Demonstrations of Joy, even to celebrate the Anniversary of *Nature's Birth*? With what admirable Propriety has the *Psalmist* compared yonder orient Sun, in all his sparkling Grandeur, to a young exulting *Bridegroom*\*; who comes forth, with every heightened Ornament from his Chamber, to shew Himself in the most distinguished Period of his Life, and to receive the Blessing which consummates his Happiness!

This most charming and equally majestic Scene, recalls to my Memory that fine Description of the MESSIAH, extant in the last lovely Strains of the *Israelitish Swan*†—*HE shall be welcome and salutary as the Light of the Morning; when the Sun ariseth, to chase the malignant Shades, and pour*  
Day

\* Psal. xix. 5.

† *Israelitish Swan*—In Allusion to those well-known Lines of the Poet,

*Multa Dircaëum levat Aura Cygnum.*

And not without a Reference to the popular Notion, that the Swan sings the most melodious Notes in its last Moments. *Fuit hæc facundi Senis quasi cygnea Vox.* TULLY.



Day through the reviving World. He shall be as the Light of a *Morning*, that is most serenely fair; *without* either Storms to disturb, or *Clouds* to obscure the glorious, the delightful Dawn. Yea, his Appearance shall be *more beautiful*, and his Influences *more beneficial\**, than the clear Shining of that grand Luminary, *after* a Night of settled Gloom, and Showers of incessant Rain. When his Beams shed animating Warmth, and vital Lustre, *on the* tender Grass impearled with Dews, and on all the green Treasures of the teeming Earth.

As we have already contemplated the blessed JESUS, under the amiable Character of the JUST ONE; the foregoing Passage of Scripture represents Him to our Faith, in the more majestic Quality of THE LORD OF GLORY.—

VOL. III.

E

Or

\* *More beautiful, more beneficial, than the clear Shining.*  
2 Sam. xxiii. 4.—Thus We have ventured to translate, or rather to paraphrase, the Words מוֹנִיחַ. That the Prefix מ often occurs in the Acceptation of *comparative Pre-eminence*, is plain from a very remarkable Passage in Psal. xix. 10. Where our inspired Author, quite ravished with the Love of the sacred Oracles, declares; *They are desirable beyond Gold, even beyond the Droppings of the Honeycomb.*

If this Sense is admitted. We shall have a fine Comparison, and a grand Advance upon it; acknowledging the *Insufficiency* even of the strongest and brightest Images, to represent the Glory of CHRIST's Kingdom, and the Benignity of his Administration.—Perhaps, the Translation may be too free and daring, and not approve itself to the exact Critic. The Sense, however, is unquestionably just; agreeable to the whole Tenour of Scripture; and can want no Recommendation to the intelligent Christian.

Or rather, unites the two grand Peculiarities, which render Him *unparalleled* in his personal, and *all-sufficient* in his mediatorial Capacity.

Great, unspeakably great and glorious would our SAVIOUR appear; if We had no other Manifestations of his Excellency, than those which preceded his mysterious Incarnation.—In the antient Scriptures, He stands characterized, as the supreme Object of GOD's ineffable Complacency; vested with a Glory, prior to the Birth of Time, or the Existence of Things; even *the Glory, which He had with the FATHER, before the World was*\*—He is every where exhibited, as the ultimate Desire of all Nations; the sole Hope of all the Ends of the Earth; the Seed, of inestimable and universal Importance, in whom all People, Nations, and Languages should be blessed.—In those royal, or rather divine *Acts and Monuments*, He is publicly recognized, as The RULER of GOD's People: Whose Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, and his Kingdom from Generation to Generation. And how august, how venerable, is this SOVEREIGN! Since it was the highest Honour of the most eminent Saints, and renowned Monarchs†, to act as his *Harbingers*. The Splendor of the Temple, the Richness of its Ornaments, and the Solemnity of its Services, were the Ensigns of his Grandeur; were his sacred *Regalia*, intended to usher Him into the World with becoming State.

Every

\* John xvii. 5.

† *Moses*, for instance, and *Joshua*, *David* and *Solomon*, were Types, strongly marked Types, of our great LAWGIVER and DELIVERER, of our Divine RULER and PREACHER.

Every inspired Prophet was his *Herald*; deputed to blazon his Perfections, or foretel his Coming. Let Us hear one, speaking the Sentiments of all.—*GOD* the *SAVIOUR* came from *Teman*, and the *HOLY ONE* from *Mount Paran*. His Glory covered the *Heavens*, and the *Earth* was full of his Praise\*. Thunders sounded his Trumpet, and Lightnings waved his Banners. Before Him went the *Pestilence*, for the Destruction of his Enemies; but for the Deliverance of *Israel*, He rode upon his Horses and Chariots of Salvation. The Mountains saw Him, and they trembled; the everlasting Hills, and they bowed

E 2

their

\* See *Habak. iii.* The greatest Part of which sublime Ode, refers to the wonderful Works, recorded by *Moses* and *Joshua*. It seems, especially in the Exordium, to be an Imitation of that grand and majestic Description, with which the *Jewish* Legislator introduces his last solemn Benediction. *Deut. xxxiii.*—These Works are by *Aspasio* ascribed to *CHRIST*. And, I think, it is demonstrably certain, that *JESUS CHRIST* is the *JEHOVAH* celebrated in the Books of *Moses*, and in the Writings of the Prophets. It is *CHRIST*, who dwelt in the burning Bush, and walked in the burning fiery Furnace. It is *CHRIST*, who wrought the Miracles in *Egypt*, and the Wonders in the Field of *Zoan*. The temporal Deliverer, and the eternal *REDEEMER* of *Israel*, are one and the same.—He is that *Captain of the Hosts of the LORD*, who gave the Nations as Dust to their Sword, and as driven Stubble to their Bow. *Josh. v. 14.*—He is that *mighty One*, who punished the stout Heart of the King of *Assyria*; who cut down the Thickets of his Forest, and lopped his Bough with Terror. *Isa. x. 34.* He gave *Moses* his Commission; gave *Moses* his Law; and was both the *LORD*, and the *End*, of that sacred, significant, mysterious Oeconomy. Compare *1 Cor. x. 9.* with *Numb. xxi. 6, 7.* See *Dan. iii. 25.* *Heb. iii. 3, 4.*

*their Heads. The Abyss uttered her Voice, and acknowledged his Sovereignty through her deepest Caverns; the towering Surges \* lifted up their Hands, and remained in a suspended Posture, while his People passed through their opening Lines.—Indeed, both Depth, and Height, and every Creature, have paid Him Homage, and done Him Service. And shall not We, my dear Theron, submit to his Righteousness? Submit! Shall we not embrace it; rely on it; and, with joyful Hearts, with triumphant Tongues, say, There is none, there is nothing, like it †.*

Does not all Mankind agree to estimate the Merit of the Practice, according to the *Dignity* of the Person? If a Neighbour of inferior Rank, visit some poor afflicted Wretch, in a coarse Garret, and on a tattered Bed; it is no very extraordinary Favour. But if a Lady of the first Distinction, or a Nobleman of the highest Order, perform the same Office; it is a much more remarkable, a much more admired Instance of self-denying Charity. On the Foot of this Calculation, to what a *supereminent* Height will the Worthiness of our LORD's Obedience rise! It will rise, like some magnificent Edifice, whose Basis rests upon the Center; whose Dimensions fill the Hemisphere; and whose Turrets glitter in the Sky. Or rather, it will extend itself to Immensity; where Length, and Breadth, and all Dimensions are lost. Especially, if We consider—The *Names*, He bears; and the *Honours*, He receives—the *Works*,  
He

\* וְהַיָּם which, I think, is put in Opposition to תְּהוֹמוֹת and forms a beautiful Contrast. *Ver. 10.*

† 1 Sam. xxi. 9.



He has done; and those *mightier* Works, He is appointed to do.

The *Names*, He bears.—The Title, by which *JESUS* of *Nazareth* is distinguished in the heavenly World; the Name written on his Vesture, and on his Thigh, is *KING* of *Kings*, and *LORD* of *Lords* \*. — The Description, which the incomprehensible *JEHOVAH* gives of the Surety for sinful Men, runs in this exalted Strain; *The Man that is MY FELLOW* †. Which the Apostle explains, in that memorable and majestic Clause; *He thought it no Robbery to be equal with GOD* ‖.—The  
HOLY

\* Rev. xix. 16.

† Zech. xiii. 7. עִמִּיתִי *Contribulis vel Coequalis*. *My Fellow*, or *my Equal*.—The original Expression occurs nowhere, but in this Verse of *Zechariah*, and in the Book of *Leviticus*. In one Text it is explained by *Brother*, or *Partaker* of the same Nature. In every other Place, I believe, it will be found to signify, not barely a *Neighbour*, but an *Equal*; one who stands upon the same Level, with regard to the Claims of Equity, and the common Rights of Life.—In either Sense, it militates strongly for the Divinity of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.

‖ *Phil.* ii. 6. Some Writers, I am aware, have endeavoured to interpret away this Evidence of our *LORD*'s Divine Nature. But I think with great Injury to the Context, and no less Violence to the Phrase.

Ἀπαλαύς, as far as I can observe, denotes, not the *Prize* or *Spoil*, but the *Act* of plundering or taking the Spoil; *Ipsarapiendi Actio*. Vid. *STEPH. Thesaur. Græc. Ling.*—If so, the Text most naturally implies, that *CHRIST* counted it no Act of Robbery; no Invasion of Another's Prerogative; but looked upon it as his unquestionable Right, to be *equal with GOD*, and to receive Divine Honours.—*Nevertheless* (ἀλλὰ, *Rom.* v. 14.) He was so far from tenaciously insisting upon, that He willingly relin-

HOLY GHOST, speaking by the Prophet *Isaiah* on the Virgin's Son, enumerates several grand Distinctions, both of his Person, and his Office. He styles the Child, that should be born, *The WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, the EVERLASTING FATHER, the MIGHTY GOD, the PRINCE OF PEACE* \*.—The same inspired Writer, though eloquent above all Orators, and more sublime than the loftiest Poet, cries

linquished the Claim. He was content to forego the magnificent Distinctions of the CREATOR, and to appear in the Form of a *Creature*. Nay, to be made in the Likeness of the *fallen* Creatures; and not only to share the Disgrace, but to suffer the Punishment, due to the *meanest* and *wilest* among them all.—An Example of Humility, worthy to be displayed by the Eloquence of an Apostle, or the Tongue of an Archangel! Worthy to be the everlasting Pattern, and the everlasting Praise of all Believers.

But however *Ἀπασμῶς* be translated, the Stress of the Argument, I apprehend, lies upon the Word *ισα*. If this signifies a *real* and *proper* Equality, the Proof seems, to me at least, irrefragable.—How shall We determine the exact Significancy of this important Word? By having recourse to *Homer's* Works, or to *Heathen* Authors? This, in case the *sacred* Writers will decide the Question, is like going from *Jerusalem* to *Athens* for the Solution of a religious Doubt, even while the College of Apostles is sitting at the former Place.—The Word occurs five or six Times in *their* Writings. They use it, it is true, in the Adjective Form. But the Adjective is very sufficient to settle the Signification of the Adverb. If I know the Meaning of *ισα*, I shall be at no loss to understand the Import of *ισα*.—See *Matt. xx. 12. Luke vi. 34. John v. 18. Acts xi. 17. Rev. xxi. 16*. In all which Places it expresses, not a bare *Resemblance* or *Likeness* only, but a *real* and *proper* Equality.

\* *Isa. ix. 6.*

cries out in rapturous Astonishment; *Who can declare his Generation* \*? What Pencil can pourtray, what Language can express, his matchless Excellencies? And may We not with equal Propriety demand; Who can declare the meritorious Perfection of his Righteousness? It is precious beyond Comparison: beyond Imagination precious.

The *Honours*, which our LORD receives are proportioned to the illustrious Characters, which He sustains.—*John* the Baptist, than whom a greater Prophet, or a better Judge, was not born of Woman, professes Himself unworthy, *to stoop down and unloose the Latchet of his Shoes* †: unworthy, though a burning and shining Light in his Generation, to perform the meanest Service to this PRINCE of Heaven.—*Stephen*, who leads the Van in the noble Army of Christian Martyrs, beheld such a Representation of his crucified MASTER's Glory; as enabled Him to *exult* with divine *Delight*, even amidst the furious Assaults of his Persecutors, and under the violent Blows of his Murderers ‡. Assured, that *JESUS* has all Power in Heaven and Earth, by an Act of the most solemn Worship, He *commits* his departing *Soul*, that most important of all Trusts, to his REDEEMER's Hand §.—Nor by the first Martyr alone, but in all Churches of the Saints, and in every Age of Christianity, has the LORD *JESUS* been addressed, as the constant Object of his People's *Adoration*; and acknowledged, as the ever faithful *Depositary* of their eternal Interests.

E 4

When

\* Isa. liii. 8.

† Mark i. 7.

‡ Acts vii. 56.

§ Acts vii. 59.

When *Isaiah* beheld a visionary Manifestation of **CHRIST** \*, the first-born Sons of Light were waiting around Him, in Postures of dutiful Submission. These celestial Beings, whose very *Feet* are too bright for Mortals to view, veil their *Faces* before his infinitely superior Effulgence. The Seraphs, who are all Zeal and all Love, celebrate his Perfections, and cry one to another, *The whole Earth is full of his Glory*.—And is not *Heaven* also filled with his Glory? Does not *Heaven* likewise resound with his Praise? The beloved Disciple, in a Vision no less clear and far more magnificent, beholds the **LAMB** that was slain, standing in the *midst* of a resplendent *Throne*; most beautifully adorned with a circling Rainbow, and terribly dignified by the Blaze of Lightnings, and the Sound of Thunders. Before this august Throne, and at the Disposal of the once slaughtered **SAVIOUR**, are *seven Lamps of burning Fire*; expressive of the **DIVINE SPIRIT**, in all the Variety of his miraculous Gifts, and sanctifying Graces †.—Four and twenty Elders, clothed in white Raiment, with Crowns on their Heads, and the Harps of **GOD** in their Hands, fall prostrate in deepest Homage before the **LAMB**. They strike the golden Strings, and sing that sublime eucharistic Hymn; *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed Us to GOD by thy Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation; and hast made Us, unto our GOD, Kings and Priests* †.

Behold

\* *Isa.* vi. 1, 2, &c. compared with *John* xii. 41.

† *Rev.* iv. 5.

‡ *Rev.* v. 9, 10.



*Behold the Hierarchies of Angels: they are in Number ten thousand times ten thousand.—Hark! They raise their Voice, and awaken all the Powers of Harmony.—Who is the Subject, and what is the Burden of their Song? Worthy is the LAMB that was slain, to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Blessing.—Nor these alone, but every Creature which is in Heaven, and on the Earth, and under the Earth, and such as are in the Sea, join the immense Chorus. They cry, in loud responsive Strains of Melody and Devotion; Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the LAMB for ever and ever\*.*

This, You observe, is the devout Acknowledgment, not only of the Cherubim, the Seraphim, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, but of every Creature.—The Sun, the Moon, and the Stars, which garnish the Heavens—Beasts and creeping Things, Mountains and Hills, fruitful Trees and all Cedars, which replenish the Earth—Metals and Minerals, Gems and Fossils, the subterraneous Riches of Nature, or Things which are under the Earth—Even all those Objects, which my Theron lately contemplated, do, in their way, magnify the LORD JESUS. They bear witness to his Power, as their CREATOR; they are subservient to his Interests, as our MEDIATOR; and, in this manner, they glorify his sacred Name.

Under such Views of the blessed REDEEMER, enlarged and elevated even to Astonishment, is it possible

\* Rev. v. 11, 12, 13.

sible to *over-rate* the Worth of his mediatorial Obedience? Is it possible to lay *too much* Stress on his expiatory Sacrifice, or ascribe *too much* Efficacy to his vicarious Righteousness.

To the Honours, which He receives, let Us add the *Works* which he has done. By these, in the Days of his Flesh, were displayed the Greatness of his Glory, and the Might of his Majesty.

*Behold!* says the Almighty FATHER; *my Servant*, He who condescends to become my Servant in the matchless Work of Redemption; *shall deal prudently*, shall conduct Himself with all the Dignity and all the Sanctity of Wisdom. In consequence of which, *He shall be exalted, be extolled, and be very high* \*.—The Paraphrase of the Jewish Commentators on this beautiful Climax is, though inadequate, not contemptible. “The MESSIAH, “ they say, shall be higher than *Abraham*, more illustrious than *Moses*, and exalted above the Angels of Light, even above the *prime Ministers* † of “ Heaven.”—What follows, is an Attempt to render this Exposition somewhat *less defective*.

Here, could You open my Chamber-door, and peep upon your Friend, you would find Him in the same Attitude, and under the same Perplexity, which were formerly observed in *Phocion*. Sitting one Day, amidst an Assembly of the People, and preparing to make a public Oration, He appeared uncommonly thoughtful. Being asked the Reason, “ I am considering, said He, how I may *shorten*, what I “ shall

\* Isa. lii. 13.

† *Prime Ministers*, this is almost a literal Translation of their Words, מלאכי השרת

"shall have Occasion to speak."—The Compass of my Subject, would demand many Volumes; whereas, the Limits of my Letter, will allow but a few Paragraphs.

Our LORD gave Sight to the *Blind*. He poured Day upon those hopeless and benighted Eyes, which had never been visited with the least dawning Ray.—The *Dumb*, at his Command, found a ready Tongue, and burst into Songs of Praise. The *Deaf* were all Ear, and listened to the joyful Sound of Salvation.—The *Lame*, lame from their very Birth, threw aside their Crutches, and full of Transport and Exultation, leaped like the bounding Roe \*, —He

\* We have the finest Representation of this Event, given Us by the inspired Historian, *Acts* iii. 8. *And He leaping up, stood, and walked, and entered with them into the Temple; walking, and leaping, and praising GOD.*—The very Language seems to exult, in a *redundant* Flow of expressive Phrases; just as a poor Cripple, who never knew either the Comfort of bodily Vigour, or the Pleasure of local Motion, may be supposed to do, when suddenly and unexpectedly blessed with both. He would exert his new acquired Powers again and again; first in one Attitude, then in another. Sometimes to try, whether He was really healed, and not under the pleasing Delusion of a Dream; sometimes from a Transport of conscious Delight, and to express the Sallies of Joy that sprung up in his Heart.

Though I acknowledge Mr. Pope's Description to be extremely beautiful,

—————*The Lame their Crutch forego,  
And leap exulting like the bounding Roe;*

yet I cannot persuade myself, that it is to be compared with St. Luke's Draught, either in the Variety of Figures; in the Richness of Colouring; or in that Exuberance of Style, which, on this Occasion, is so happily significant, and so perfectly picturesque.

—He restored *Floridity* and *Beauty* to the Flesh, emaciated by consuming Sicknefs, or encrusted with a lothesome Leprosy. — All Manner of *Diseases*, though blended with the earliest Seeds of Life, and riveted in the Constitution by a long inveterate Pre-dominancy—Diseases, that baffled the Skill of the Physician, and mocked the Force of Medicine—*these* He cured, not by tedious Applications, but in the Twinkling of an Eye; not by costly Prescriptions, or painful Operations, but by a *Word* from his Mouth, or a *Touch* from his Hand; nay, by the *Fringe* of his Garment, or the bare Act of his Will.

Any *one* of these Miracles, had been enough to endear the Character, and eternize the Memory of another Person. But they were *common* Things, Matters of *daily* Occurrence, with our Divine MASTER. The Years of his public Ministry, were an unintermitted Series of such healing Wonders; or, if any Intermission took place, it was only to make way for more invaluable Miracles of spiritual Beneficence.

Behold Him exercising his Dominion over the *vegetable* Creation. A *Fig-Tree*, adorned with the most promising Spread of Leaves, but unproductive of the expected Fruit, *withers away* at his Rebuke. It is not only stripped of its verdant Honours, but dried up from the very Roots \*, and perishes for ever. A fearful, yet significant Intimation, of that final Ruin, which will overtake the *specious* Hypocrite. Who, while lavish in outward Profession, is destitute of inward Piety.

His

\* Mark xi. 20.



His Eye pierced through the whole *World of Waters*; discerned the Fish, that had just swallowed a Piece of silver Coin; and guided its Course to *Peter's Hook* \*. 'Tis true, when the Gatherers of the *sacred Tax* came, to collect his Share for the Reparation of the Temple; He had not a Sufficiency of Money, to satisfy so small a Demand †. Yet He takes occasion, from this most abject Poverty, to manifest the Immensity of his Riches. He makes the great Deep his *Revenue*; and bids the scaly Nations bring him their *Tribute*. Never was such Indigence associated with such Magnificence! And never, never let Us forget, that the Indigence was ours, the Magnificence all his own!

The *Waters* themselves, it may be said, are far more unmanageable, than their Inhabitants. Who can controul that *outrageous Element*? Which has destroyed so many gallant Fleets, with the Armies they bore; and which would laugh at the Opposition of the united World.—The *LORD JESUS* walks upon its rolling Surges ‡, and speaks its most tem-

\* *Matt. xvii. 27.* How wonderful is this seemingly little Miracle! Or rather, what a *Cluster* of Wonders is comprized in this *single Act*! —That any Fish, with Money in its Mouth, should be caught—with Money just of such a Value—and in the very first Fish that offered itself—What a pregnant Display of *Omniscience* to know, of *Omnipotence* to over-rule, all these *fortuitous Incidents*!

† About Fourteen-pence.

‡ He treadeth upon the *Waves of the Sea*, is one of the Prerogatives, ascribed to the most high GOD, *Job ix. 8.* The original Word *בְּמוֹתַי* signifies a Sea, that rolls *Mountain-high*; and such, We have Reason to suppose, were the Waves on which our LORD walked; since the

tempestuous Agitations into a Calm. *The Waves of the Sea are mighty, and rage horribly, but yet the LORD, who loved Us, and washed Us from our Sins in his own Blood, is mightier\*.*

The *Winds* are yet more ungovernable, than the madding Ocean. When these are hurled † abroad, to shatter the Forests, and shake the Shores, Who can curb their Rage? What can *withstand* their Impetuosity? Even the boisterous Winds hear the SAVIOUR's Voice; and, as soon as they hear, *obey*. His Voice, more powerful to restrain, than brazen Dungeons to confine, chides the furious Whirlwind. The furious Whirlwind is awed into immediate ‡ Silence.

the Vessel to which He bent his Course, was *Baran-Suener*, lashed, battered, tormented, by their vehement Concussions. Matt. xiv. 24.

\* Psal. xciii. 5.

† This is the literal Translation of that beautiful Hebrew Phrase, which occurs *Jonah* i. 4.—The sacred Writer, describing the stormy Messenger, which was dispatched to arrest a fugitive Servant, says *הוּרְחַל*—The LORD hurled forth a great Wind. The same Expression is applied to *Saul*, (1 Sam. xviii. 11.) when He darted his javelin at *David*, with a Design to transfix and nail Him to the Wall.—What an elegant, and how awful an Image! Storms and Tempests, with all their irresistible Fury and dreadful Ravages, are like *missive Weapons* in the Hand of JEHOVAH. Which He launches with greater Ease and surer Aim, than the most expert Warrior emits the pointed Steel.

‡ Immediate—This Circumstance, as very much *aggrandizing* the Miracle, is, with great historical Propriety, remarked by the Evangelist. The Sea is known to have a prodigious *Swell*, and very tremendous Agitations, for a considerable Time after the tempestuous Wind ceases. On this Occasion, and in Obedience to its MAKER's Will, it departs from the *established* Laws of Motion.—

No

lence. That which a Moment ago, heaved the Billows to the Clouds, and filled with Outrage the howling Firmament; now gently whispers among the Shrouds, and scarcely curls the smooth Expanse.

Something there is, even within the narrow Compass of our own *Breasts*, which affords Room for more signal Exertions of DEITY, than the turbulent Billows, or the resistless Storm. Agreeably to the Suggestion of a Prophet; *For lo! He that formeth the Mountains; and createth the Wind; and, as a more pregnant Proof of divine Perfection, declareth unto Man what is his Thought, the GOD of Hosts is his Name \**; the Possessor of such surpassing Power and Wisdom, must unquestionably be the supreme LORD. And Who is this, but JESUS CHRIST? *He knew, what was in Man †*. He discerned the Secrets of the Heart; discerned the latent Purpose, before it disclosed itself in Action; even before it was uttered in Speech; nay, while it lay yet an informed Embrio in the Mind.

His Glance pierced into *Futurity*: espied Events, in all their Circumstances ‡, and with the greatest Perspi-

No sooner is the Word spoken, but there is a *Calm*; not an advancing, but an *instantaneous* Calm; not a partial, but a *perfect* Calm. *Matt. viii. 26. Mark iv. 39.*

\* Amos iv. 13.

† *John ii. 25.* This all-discerning Intelligence of the DEITY, is very emphatically expressed by the Psalmist, *Psal. cxxxix. 1, 2, &c.* though the Sentiment, in *one* Clause seems to be somewhat weakened by our Version. *There is not a Word in my Tongue*, would have a nobler Turn, and more extensive Meaning, if rendered; *BEFORE the Word is on my Tongue, Thou, O LORD, knowest it altogether.*

‡ *In all their Circumstances*—See a very remarkable Exemplification of this Particular, *Mark xiv. 13. There shall*

Perſpicuity, before they came into Being. The *hidden* Things of Darkneſs were open, and the *Contingencies* of to-morrow were preſent, to his all-pervading Eye. Nay, the unthought-of Revolutions even of diſtant Ages, the aſtoniſhing Cataſtrophe of diſſolving Nature, and the awful Proceſs of ever-laſting Judgment, He clearly foreſaw, and particularly foretold.

Nor does He only *penetrate* the Reſſes, but *over-rule* the Operations of the Soul.—He ſo *intimidated* a Multitude of ſacrilegious Wretches, that they fled, not before his drawn Sword, or bent Bow, but at the Shaking of his ſingle Scourge \*.—He ſo  
*awed,*

*ſhall meet you*—not barely a *Perſon*, but the Sex and Age are both ſpecified—not two, or ſeveral, but *one* Man—not within any given Space of Time, but at the *very Inſtant* of your Arrival—not empty-handed, but bearing a *Veſſel*—not of Wood or Metal, but an earthen *Pitcher*—filled, not with Wine or Milk, but with *Water*—carrying it into *that very* Houſe, where the Preparation was made, and the Paſſover was to be celebrated.—What a Multitude of *Contingencies*! All minutely foretold by our LORD!

\* *John* ii. 14, 15, &c. St. *Jerom* looks upon this Miracle, as one of the greateſt, which our SAVIOUR wrought. And indeed the Circumſtances are very extraordinary.—That *one* Man ſhould undertake ſo *bold*, and execute ſo *hazardous* a Task—One Man, without a *Commiſſion* from *Cæſar* without any *Countenance* from the *Jewiſh* Rulers; without any *Arms*, either to terrify the Multitude or defend Himſelf.—That He ſhould caſt out the whole Tribe of mercenary Traffickers; wreſt, from thoſe Worſhippers of Wealth, their darling Idol; and trample under Foot their great *Diana*—And all, without Tumult or Oppoſition; not one of the ſacrilegious Rabble, daring to “move the Hand, or open the Mouth, or “peep.”—Whoever reflects on the *fierce* and *ungovernable* Nature of an incenſed Populace; or conſiders the *bitter*  
*and*



*awed*, by one short Remonstrance\*, an Assembly of conceited and ostentatious *Pharisees*, that they could neither gainsay, nor endure the Energy of his Discourse. Though not to endure, was a tacit Acknowledgment of Guilt, and must cover them with public Confusion. — With a Word, the most *mild* and gentle † imaginable, He flung such Terror into a Band of armed Men; as blasted all their Courage, and laid them *stunned* and *prostrate* on the Ground.

All Hearts are in his Hand. He turneth them, as the Rivers of Water, whithersoever He will ‡; with as much Ease, and with the same efficacious Sway, as the Current of the Rivers is turned by every Inflection of the Channel. — *Follow me*, was his Call to James and John: *Follow me* §, was all He said to Levi the Publican. Though the first were engaged in all the Ardour of Business; though the last was sitting at the very Receipt of Custom; yet both He and they, without any Demur, or the least Delay, left their Employ, left their nearest Relations, and

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resigned

and outrageous Zeal of *Demetrius* and the Craftsmen, on a less irritating Occasion; may possibly find Himself almost, if not altogether, of the *Latin* Father's Opinion.

\* John viii. 7. † John xviii. 6. ‡ Prov. xxi. 1.

§ Mark ii. 14. He said in the Beginning, *Let there be Light*; there was Light: *Let there be a Firmament*; 'twas spread abroad: *Let there be a World*; it arose of Nothing. — In the Days of his Flesh likewise, He speaks, and it is done. His Word is a Work. He says to the Disciples, *Follow me*; they come—to the Leper, *Be clean*; He is cleansed—to the Paralytic, *Arise, take up thy Bed, and walk*; 'tis all performed, as soon as commanded. — Surely then We must confess, this is the Voice of a GOD, not of a Man! *Follow* is our LORD's usual Word, when He grants a miraculous Cure: which exactly corresponds with that admired and magnificent Expression ¶ Gen. i. 3.

resigned their *earthly All*, to attend a poor and despised MASTER. — Their Acquaintance, no doubt, would remonstrate a thousand Inconveniencies; their Enemies would not fail to censure them, as rash Enthusiasts; but all these Considerations were lighter than Dust, were less than nothing, when set in Competition with *two Words only* from JESUS of Nazareth. Impressed, deeply impressed by his powerful Summons, such Loss they counted Gain, and such Obloquy Glory.

He planted Bowels of Compassion in the unfeeling avaricious Wretch; and *elevated*, beyond the Height of the Stars, Desires that lay *groveling* even below the Mire of the Swine. The *Slaves* of Sin He restored to the *Liberty* of Righteousness; and unhappy Creatures, who were degenerated into the Likeness of the Devil, He renewed after the Image of the blessed GOD. — These were the Effects of his personal Preaching; these are still the Conquests of his glorious Gospel; and do not these declare his Dominion over the Intellectual Oeconomy? That the *World of Minds*, as well as of material Nature, is open to his Inspection, and subject to his Controul?

The *Dead* seem to be more remote from human Cognizance, than the Secrets of the Breast; less liable to any human Jurisdiction, than the warring Elements. What Potentate can issue a *Writ of Release* to the Grave? Or cite the dislodged Soul, to re-enter the breathless Corpse? — Yet this, even this, our mighty MEDIATOR executed. He opened the Eyes, which were *sunk* in their Sockets, and *sealed* in the Tomb. He bid the Heart, that had forgot its vital Motion, spring into renewed and vigorous

ous Life. The crimson Flood, long congealed by the icy Hand of Death; which had not only lost its Pulse by *Stagnation*, but likewise changed its very Texture by *Putrefaction* \*; circulates, at his Order, all floud and mantling with Health, through the wondering Veins.—The *Spirit*, which had taken its Flight into the *invisible* State, had taken its Place in eternal Habitations, returns, at our REDEEMER's Signal, to the Tenement of mouldering Clay; and, by the amazing Visit, proclaims his Sovereignty over those *unknown Realms*, and their mysterious Inhabitants.

As He recalls from, so He admits into, the Abodes of future Happiness. In the very lowest Depths of his Humiliation, He disposed of the *Seats of Bliss*, and the *Thrones of Glory*. His Hands, when swollen with Wounds, and nailed to the Tree, evidently sustained the *Keys of Hell and of Death* †. Then, even then, He opened and He shut either the Gates of the Grave, or the Portals of Paradise. What He speaks to the penitent Thief, is the Language of supreme Authority; *To Day shalt thou be with me in Paradise* ‡. 'Tis a royal *Mandamus*, not an humble Petition.

Does our LORD's Superiority extend to those malignant Beings, the Devil and his Angels?—Even these, in sight of all their formidable Strength ||,

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and

\* John xi. 39. † Rev. i. 18. ‡ Luke xxiii. 43.

|| Milton, describing the Power of the apostate Angels, says;

—————The least of Whom could wield  
These Elements; and arm Him with the Force  
Of all their Regions.

Book VI. 221.



and inextinguishable Rage, He makes his Footstool. He brake the Teeth of those infernal Lions; and rescued the helpless Prey, on which their bloody Jaws were closing. At his Command, they abandon their Conquests; and relinquish, however *indignant*, however *reluctant*, their long-accustomed Habitations. His *single* Command, more forcible than *ten thousand* Thunderbolts, dispossesses a whole Legion \* of those fierce and haughty Spirits; drives them, all terrified and deprecating severer Vengeance, to seek Rest in solitary Deserts, or to herd with the most fordid Brutes.

As the blessed JESUS treads upon the Necks of those Powers of Darkness, He receives the willing Services of the *Angels of Light*. They that *excel* † in Strength, and are *active* as Flames of Fire, even they fulfil his Commandment, and hearken unto the Voice of his Words. They graced the Solemnity of

\* Mark v. 9.

† Would any One see a Sketch of the Glory and Excellence of the angelic Nature? Let Him see it, in that inimitably fine Stroke of the sacred Pencil. *I saw another Angel come down from Heaven, having great Power, and the Earth was lightened with his Glory.* Rev. xviii. 1. The last Clause is, I think, one of the most masterly Touches of descriptive Painting, extant in History, Poetry, or Oratory. Milton gives Us a Stricture of the same Kind, and on the same Subject. But the *poetic Flight*, though very sublime, is absolutely inferior to the *apocalyptic Vision*.

— On He led

*His radiant Files, dazzling the Moon.*

In this Case, We have a *whole* Brigade of celestial Warriors; in the former, only a *single* angelic Being. Those are represented, as irradiating the *Night*, and outshining the



of his Birth; they attended Him, after his Temptation in the Wilderness; they were the first joyful Preachers of his triumphant Resurrection; and now He is seated on the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Highest,

—*They stand with Wings outspread,  
Listening to catch their Master's least Command,  
And fly through Nature, e'er the Moment end.*

Behold Him, now, doing according to his Will, in the Armies of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants of the Earth—Swaying the Sceptre, over the Legions of Hell, and the Powers of Nature—Exercising Dominion, in the Hearts of Men, in the Territories of the Grave, and Mansions of disembodied Spirits. Then let my *Theron* determine—under such Views of our SAVIOUR's unequalled Majesty, and unbounded Sovereignty, let Him determine—whether it be safer, to rest our infinite and eternal Interests, on *our own* Righteousness, rather than on *His*.

We have selected some few Manifestations of our REDEEMER's excellent Greatness. Even the Evangelical Historians, give us no larger a Proportion of his astonishing Deeds, than the First-fruits bear to a copious Harvest. Yet, were they all particularly

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enumerated,

the Moon: this, as exceeding the Brightness of the Sun; diffusing additional Splendors on the Day; and illuminating, not a vast Plain, not a vaster Kingdom, but the whole Face of the Globe.—If such be the Lustre of the Servant, what Images can display the Majesty of the LORD? Who has *thousand Thousands* of those glorious Attendants ministering unto Him, and *ten thousand times ten thousand* standing before Him? Dan. vii. 10.

enumerated, and circumstantially displayed, they would appear inconsiderable; compared with those far *more distinguished* Trophies of Almighty Power, which He has decreed, in some future Period, to erect \*.

He will gather to his sacred Fold, the People of his antient Church; though they are *dispersed* into all Lands, and most inveterately *prejudiced* against the Truth of his Gospel.—How mighty was his Hand, how illustriously outstretched his Arm, when He made a Path through the Surges of the Ocean; drove the Torrent of *Jordan* backwards; and fetched Rivers of Waters from the flinty Rock! Far more mighty will be its Operations, when He shall remove the  
seemingly

\* The Dignity of our LORD, considered as the CREATOR and PRESERVER of all Things, is not mentioned *Here*; because, something of this Kind is professedly attempted, in *The Descant upon Creation*, subjoined to the first Volume of *Meditations among the Tombs*, &c. To which I beg Leave to refer my Readers. And shall more than make amends for the present Omision, by transcribing a Passage from the *Night-Thoughts*; which presents Us with a magnificent Display of this great Truth.

—————THOU, by whom all Worlds  
Were made, and one redeem'd; whose regal Power  
On more than adamantine Basis fix'd;  
O'er more, far more than Diadems and Thrones  
Inviolably reigns; beneath whose Foot,  
And by the Mandate of whose awful Nod,  
All Regions, Revolutions, Fortunes, Fates,  
Of High, of Low, of Mind and Matter, roll  
Through the short Channels of expiring Time,  
Or shoreless Ocean of Eternity.

Night-Thoughts, N<sup>o</sup> IX.

seemingly unsurmountable Obstructions, to the general *Restoration* of the *Jews*; shall throw all their religious Apprehensions into a new Channel; and cause Tears of penitential Sorrow to start from their stony Eyes, Confessions of unfeigned Faith to issue from their blaspheming Lips.—Yet thus it will assuredly be. In the Volume of the divine Book it is written, *They shall look on Him, whom they have pierced, and mourn* \*. They shall adore as the MESSIAH, the once despised *Galilean*; and fix all their Hopes of final Felicity on that very PERSON, whom their Fathers slew and hanged on a Tree.

Amazing Revolution in the religious World! Yet this, together with the Destruction of *Antichrist*, and the Illumination of the benighted *Gentiles*, may pass for small Incidents; compared with those stupendous Events, which will dignify, and signalize the closing Scene of Affairs.

Then, shall the LORD JESUS be manifested in unspeakable Glory; and exert such Acts of Omnipotence, as will be the Terror of Hell, the Joy of Heaven, the Wonder of Eternity.—Then, will He put an end to Time, and bid the Springs of Nature cease to operate. Then, shall his tremendous Trumpet rend the universal Vault, and pierce the Dormitories of the Dead.—Then, will He shake the Earth out of its Place †, and before his majestic Presence the Heavens shall flee away ‡.—Then shall, not a Nation

\* Zech. xiii. 10.

† Job ix. 6.

‡ How grand is the Idea, when David prays! Bow thy Heavens, O LORD, and come down; touch the Mountains, and they shall smoke.—Much grander is the Image,



Nation only, but Multitudes, Multitudes of Nations,

be

when He says; *The Springs of Waters were seen, and the Foundations of the World were discovered, at thy Chiding, O LORD, at the Blast of the Breath of thy Displeasure.*—Transcendently and inimitably grand is *this* Description, though given Us by the most plain and artless Writer in the World: *I saw a great white Throne, and HIM THAT SAT ON IT, from whose Face the Heavens and the Earth fled away, and there was no Place found for them.* Rev. xx. 11.

In *Virgil's* admired Representation, *Jupiter* hurls his Thunder and a Mountain falls at the Stroke;

—Ille flagranti  
Aut Atho, aut Rhodopen, aut alta Ceraunia Telo  
Dejicit.

Georg. I. 331.

In *Homer's* more terror-striking Piece, *Neptune* shakes the wide-extended Earth. The Mountains tremble to their Center; the Ocean heaves its Billows; and Cities reel on their Foundations.

—Αὐτὰρ ἐνὶ Πόσειδων σίναξι  
Γαίαν αἰπειρεσίην, ὄρεων τ' αἰπείνα κρήνην,  
Παῖς δ' εὐσειονίο ποδες πολυπιδάκνυ ἰδὼς  
Καὶ κορυφαί, Τρωάδι πόλιν, ἐκ τῆς Αἰχαιῶν.

Iliad. γ. 57.

Here, the SON of the eternal GOD appears only, and all Nature is alarmed: nor Heaven nor Earth can keep their Standing: they flee away, like the frightened Roe.—How *groveling* are the loftiest Flights of the Grecian and Roman Muse, compared with this Magnificence and Elevation of the prophetic Spirit!

Let Us consider the Passage a little more attentively. *Vult hæc sub Luce videri.* Masterly Performances, the more closely they are examined, the more highly they charm.—It is not said, A few Herds of the Forest, a few Kings, or Armies, or Nations; but the *whole System* of created Things.—It is not said, They were thrown into great Commotions, but they *fled* intirely away; not, they started from their Foundations, but they *fell* into Dissolu-



*be born in a Day* \*; yea rather, in an Hour, in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye.—All that are asleep in the Beds of Death; even those who, perishing in *Tempests*, are sunk to the Bottom of the Ocean; or, swallowed up by *Earthquakes*, are buried at the Center of the Globe; all shall hear his Voice; and hearing, shall awake; and awaking, shall come forth.—Every human Body, though *Ages* have revolved, since it gave up the ghost; though *Worms* have devoured the Flesh, and Dissolution mouldered the Bones; though its Parts have been *grinded* by the Teeth of Beasts, or *consumed* by the Rage of Fire; dissipated in *viewless* Winds, or scattered over the *boundless* Globe; lost to our Senses, and lost even to our Imagination; yet will every human Body then be restored; its Limbs reassembled, and not an Atom wanting; its Frame rebuilt, and never be demolished more.

Then, shall the unnumbered Myriads of departed Spirits return from their separate Abodes; and, commissioned by HIM *who is the Resurrection and the Life*, reanimate each his organized System.—Then, shall *Satan* and his Accomplices, those execrable and horrid Criminals, be dragged from their Dungeons of

*Dissolution*; not, they removed to a distant Place, but *there was found no Place for them*; they ceased to exist; they were no more.—And all this, not at the strict Command of the LORD JESUS; not at his awful Menace, or before his fiery Indignation; but at the *bare Presence* of his Majesty, sitting with serene but adorable Dignity on his Throne.

If this is not the *true Sublime*, in its utmost Scope, Force, and Beauty, I must confess, I never saw it, nor ever expect to see it.

\* Isa. lx. 8.

of Darkness, and receive their Doom at the REDEEMER's Tribunal.—Then, will Misery and Happiness, both *consummate*, and both *everlasting*, be awarded by the SAVIOUR's Sentence.—Then, will He consign over the *ungodly* World, and the rebellious Angels, to the Flames of Hell, and to Agonies of Despair. Then, will He invest the *Righteous* with the Inheritance of Heaven, and inflate them in the Fulness of Joy. His Word is Fate; *Immutability* seals, and *Eternity* executes, whatever He decrees.

And has *this* JESUS, so glorious, so majestic, so adorable—has HE vouchsafed to take our Nature, and become our Righteousness? Was HE made under the Law? Did HE fulfil all its Demands? Give perfect Satisfaction to the *penal*, and yield perfect Obedience to the *preceptive*? On purpose, that the Merit of *all* might be made over to Us?—Astonishing Condescension! Ineffable Grace! What Thanks are due, to such infinitely rich Goodness!—What a Remedy is here, for the Impotence and Guilt of fallen Man!—What a sure Foundation of Hope, and what an abundant Source of Joy, to every One that believeth?

It is declared by the Oracle of GOD, That *such an HIGH-PRIEST became Us*, was absolutely necessary for our obnoxious and ruined Condition, *who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from Sinners—and made higher than the Heavens*\*. It appears, I flatter myself, from the Letter already in your Hand, That

\* Heb. vii. 26.

That *CHRIST* fully answered the former Character; and from this Epistle, I hope it will appear, That He is the very Person described in the latter Clause.

Estimate now, my dear Friend, estimate if You can, the Glory and Excellency of this Sublime PERSON. Then may You learn, how to state the *Worth* of his Righteousness, and the *Degree* of Affiance suited to his Merits. Rather you will perceive, that his spotless Birth, his perfectly obedient Life, his exquisitely bitter Death, are a Satisfaction of unknown Dignity; *precious*\*, far beyond all the Graces of Men, and all the Duties of Angels; *able* to save to the uttermost, all that rely on<sup>t</sup> them, and come unto GOD through them.

Consonant to this, are the Sentiments of that penetrating Critic and profound Scholar, Dr. *Lightfoot*. Who, treating of our SAVIOUR's Obedience, says—"Add to all this the Dignity of his Person, "who performed this Obedience: that He was GOD "as well as Man: and his Obedience is infinite. Such "as, in its Validity, subdued Satan, and in its All- "sufficiency satisfied the Justice of GOD."—After which, our celebrated Author makes this important and delightful Improvement; "Think, *Christian*, "what a Stock of Obedience and Righteousness here "is for thee, to answer and satisfy for thy Disobedi- "ence and Unrighteousness, if Thou become a Child "of the Covenant. Here is enough for every Soul "that comes to Him, be they never so many. Like "the

\* This is expressed by the sacred Historian, with an Energy which no Translation can equal; *την τιμην τῆς πλημμελειᾶς οὐ πληροῦσά τοις ἀπο νόμου Ἰσραὴλ.* Matt. xxvii. 9.

“the Widow’s Oil in the Book of *Kings*, there is  
 “enough and enough again, as long as any Vessel is  
 “brought to receive it \*.”

We need not wonder, that *Gentiles*, who are ignorant of the REDEEMER; that *Jews*, who treat Him with contemptuous Scorn; that *Professors* of Religion, who deny his eternal GODHEAD; place little, if any Confidence in his Righteousness. But it is strange, that *Christians*, who know the SAVIOUR; who acknowledge his Divinity; and believe Him to be exalted above all Blessing and Praise—it is exceedingly strange, that they do not *rejoice* in Him; *make their boast* of Him; and say, with a becoming Disdain, of every other Dependence, *Get ye hence †!*

Such an Assemblage of divine Perfections, must warrant, must demand, the most undivided, and the most unbounded Confidence.—There never was, no, not in all Ages, nor in all Worlds, any thing greater or richer, more dignified or exalted, than the Obedience of our LORD.—Nay; it is impossible to imagine, what could be *so* suited to our Wants, *so* proper for our Reliance, or *so* sure to answer, more than answer all our Expectations.

Remember what the Apostle affirms, and you will not wonder at my Assertion. *In HIM dwelleth all the Fulness of the GODHEAD bodily.* How comprehensive and exalted is this Description! It collects into a Point all the Rays of Majesty and Honour. It expresses in a Sentence, I say not whatever this Pen has written, but whatever of Dignity and Excellence the

\* *Lighfoot’s Works*, Vol. II. p. 1258.

† *Isa.* xxx. 22.



the Bible itself contains—*The GOD HEAD*, the very Nature and Essence of the DEITY—*The Fulness* of the GOD HEAD; unerring Wisdom, almighty Power, and whatever the great JEHOVAH challenges as his own—*All* the Fulness; every adorable Attribute, in the most ample Measure, and in the highest Degree—*All* this *dwells*, not visits occasionally, but *statedly*, *invariably*, *eternally* resides—*Dwells* in CHRIST JESUS *bodily*, with an Union inconceivably close and intimate; insomuch that the GOD HEAD inhabiting, and the Manhood inhabited, make but one and the same PERSON.

Therefore, adds the sacred Disputant, *ye are complete in HIM\**. Never was any Conclusion more weighty in itself, or founded on more solid Principles.—Ye are not only pardoned, but reconciled; and not only reconciled, but justified; nay, ye are—and what can be said or desired more?—ye are COMPLETE. And not barely before Men or Angels, but before infinite Purity and Omniscience itself. *Ye are made* (amazing and charming Truth!) *the Righteousness of GOD* † in this wonderful SAVIOUR.—What a Fountain is this, or rather what a Sea of fathomless Depth, to obliterate all Sins, and supply all Wants! What a Mirrour of GOD's stupendous Grace, and ever to be adored Loving-kindness!

Here let our Meditations fix, and here let all our Expectations center. From this, not from any thing of our own, let Us derive our Peace, our Joy, our supreme Complacency.—Into this Subject We can never dive too deeply. Of this Subject We can never think too magnificently. The Righteousness of

\* Col. ii. 9, 10.

† 2 Cor. v. 21.

of **CHRIST** is the Master-Pillar, on which our eternal Welfare rests. Nay, it is the only Support, which preserves Us from sinking into endless Perdition.

*There hangs all human Hope: that Nail supports  
Our falling Universe.*

This renders his Intercession prevalent. He is an Advocate, a successful Advocate with the **FATHER**. Why? Because He is **JESUS CHRIST the Righteous**\*.—From hence results his Ability to justify. He shall justify Many, saith the **LORD JEHIOVAH**. On what Consideration? Because He is my *righteous Servant*†.—This, and no other, is the meritorious Cause of our Salvation. *Judah shall be saved; shall escape Damnation, and inherit Glory.* On what Account? On Account of *the righteous BRANCH raised up unto David*‡.—Since then our Acceptance, Justification, and Salvation: since our Comfort in Time, and our Happiness to Eternity, all depend upon the Righteousness of **CHRIST**; how should we delight in contemplating its *faultless*, its *matchless*, its *transcendent* Excellency! — Grand! All-sufficient! In every respect perfect! — Nothing equal to it, on Earth, in Heaven, throughout the Universe! — Surpassing the Enormity of our Guilt!

\* 1 John ii. 1.

† Isa. liii. 11.

‡ Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. I believe, it will be needless to observe, that the Salvation, mentioned in this and other Passages of like Import, is not limited to a temporal Deliverance, but extends to a State of spiritual and eternal Happiness. The temporal is only a subordinate Blessing; a Kind of Appendage to the other: somewhat like the Halo round the Globe of the Moon, or that faint and secondary Range of Colours, which frequently attends the glowing Rainbow.

Guilt ! Surpassing the Reach of our Imagination !  
 Surpassing all that We can express or conceive !  
 Being truly, properly, absolutely DIVINE !

And is this Righteousness mine ? Is this Righteousness yours, *Theron* ? Is this Righteousness free for every Sinner ? Pleasing, captivating, rapturous Thought ! — Who can forbear exulting and triumphing, in this boundless, this infinite Blessing. — On such an Occasion, methinks, some Sallies of Enthusiasm, or even some Starts of Tautology, are the Language of Sensibility, of Propriety, of Nature. Sing, *O ye Heavens* ; for the LORD, the LORD Himself, hath done it. Our justifying Righteousness is finished ; finished by JEHOVAH, sojourning in human Clay. Shout ye lower Parts of the Earth : break forth into Singing, ye Mountains ; O Forest, and every Tree therein. For the LORD hath most marvelously redeemed Jacob, and no less illustriously glorified himself in the Recovery of Israel \*. — O for the Tongue of a Seraph ! — But even this would be defective : such Ardour cold, and such Energy languid.

I have done : I add no more : I leave it — to some future Letter ? to some more labour'd Essay ? No ; but to the Hymns of Heaven, and the Adorations of Eternity, to supply the Deficiency of my Acknowledgments. — In the mean Time, let me intreat my *Theron* to contemplate our LORD JESUS CHRIST, under that most illustrious Character, described by the Prophet, A PRIEST upon his THRONE †. Dignifying the sacerdotal Center by the regal Diadem ; adding all the Honours of his eternal Divinity, to the Sacrifice of his bleeding Humanity. — Then, I promise

\* Isa. xlv. 23.

† Zech. vi. 13.



mise myself, You will find it almost impossible, not to adopt the emphatical and ardent Protestation of the Apostle; *GOD forbid, that I should glory, that I should confide, save only in the Obedience and the Cross of CHRIST JESUS my LORD!*

When You made the Tour of *France* and *Italy*; and, crossing the *Alps*, gained the Summit of some commanding Ridge—When you looked round, with Astonishment and Delight, on the *ample Plains*, which crouded with Cities, and adorned with Palaces, stretch their beauteous Tracts below—When you surveyed the *famous Rivers*, that roll in silent but shining Dignity; stating the Boundaries of Kingdoms, and waisting Plenty through the gladdened Nations—When You shot your transported View to the *Ocean*, whose unmeasurable Flood meets the Arch of Heaven, and terminates the Landſchape with inconceivable Grandeur—Did You, then, choose to forego the Pleasure resulting from such a Prospect, in order to gaze upon the *naked Cragg* of some adjacent Rock? Or, could You turn your Eyes from those magnificent Objects, and fasten them with pleased Attention upon a *shallow Puddle*, that lay stagnating at your Feet?

You, Who have beheld the Scene, can accommodate the Simile, with peculiar Advantage. For which Reason, I shall wave the Application; and only beg leave to transcribe a Wish, that is now warm on my Heart, and is often breathed in Supplication from my Lips—May the FATHER of our Spirits, and the Fountain of Wisdom, *give us an inlightened Understanding, to KNOW Him that is true: grant Us the inestimable Blessing, that We may BE IN Him*



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*Him that is true, even in his SON JESUS CHRIST. For, this SAVIOUR is the true GOD, and that Privilege is Life eternal\*.*

My Theron needs no Argument to convince Him, that such a Prayer is an Act of rational and real Friendship; is the most genuine and substantial Proof, that I am

*His truly affectionate,*

ASPASIO.



## L E T T E R IX.

THERON to ASPASIO.

Dear ASPASIO,

**Y**OUR two Letters have reached my Hand; and I hope they have not missed my Heart. I might inform You, what Pleasure they gave me, and how highly I esteem them. But You desire no such Compliments: You desire to see me impressed with the Sentiments, and living under their Influence. This would be the most acceptable Acknowledgment to my *Aspasio*, because it would be the most happy Effect to his *Theron*. May every Day, therefore, bring a fresh Accession of *such* Gratitude to me, and of *such* Satisfaction to You!

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T.

\* 1 John .v. 20.

To watch for my Soul, and pray for my Salvation, I am thoroughly convinced, is the truest Instance of rational and exalted Friendship. Every Claim to that amiable Character, is *defective* and *vain*, if it does not extend to our spiritual Interests, and our everlasting Welfare. For which Reason, I need not intreat *You* to continue and perpetuate this best Expression of social Kindness. Or if I do, it is rather to testify how much I prize the Favour, than to prompt your affectionate and ready Mind.

Your last found me at a Friend's House, which lies pretty near the *western Ocean*.—Yesterday waked by the Lark, and rising with the Dawn\*, I strolled into the fragrant Air, and dewy Fields. While, as *Shakespeare* with his usual Sprightliness expresses himself,

————— *Jocund Day*  
*Stood tip-toe on the misty Mountain's Top.*

Sweet was the Breath of Morn, and sweet the Exhalations of the freshened Flowers—Grateful were the soft Salutes of the cooling Zephyrs, attended with the Charm of earliest Birds—Delightful the Sun, painting with his orient Beams the Chambers of the

Fir-

\* *Evandrum ex humili Testo Lux suscitāt alma,*  
*Et matutini Volucrum sub Culmine Cantus.* VIRG.

*Lux alma*—A lovely Expression! Describing the Mildness, the Beauty, and the cheering Efficacy of the rising Sun. It is, I think, incapable of an equal Translation; but reminds me of a very fine Comparison in our *sacred Eclogues*, which represents the charming Appearance, and the benign Influence of the Gospel-church, at its first Opening on the *Gentile World*—*Who is this that looketh forth as the Morning?* Cant. vi, 10.

Firmament, and unveiling the Face of universal Nature.

My Mind, but little affected with these inferior Entertainments, was engaged in contemplating an Object of infinitely superior Dignity. In contemplating that Adorable BEING, who raised —from *nothing* raised this stupendous System of Things; and supports—with his *Word* supports the magnificent Frame. Who (to speak in the Language of his own SPIRIT) *openeth the Eyelids of the Morning, and commandeth the Day-spring to know its Place* \*. Commandeth the Light, by its punctual and pleasing Ministrations, to draw aside the Curtain of Darkneſs; and discover the Skies, ſhining with Glories; and diſcloſe the Earth, blooming with Beauties.

FATHER of Light and Life, ſaid my transport-  
ed Mind,

—Thou GOOD SUPREME!

O teach me what is good! Teach me *THYSELF*.

Save me from Folly, Vanity, and Vice,

From every low Purſuit! and feed my Soul

With Faith, with conſcious Peace, and Virtue pure,

Sacred, ſubſtantial, never-fading *Blis* †.

Wrapt in Wonder, and loſt in Thought, I rambled careleſſly along, till I was inſenſibly brought to the Shore. Which, in theſe Parts, is prodigiouſly high and ſtrong: perfectly well fitted, to ſtand as an everlaſting Barrier ‡, againſt the impetuous Stroke of

\* Job xxxviii. 12.

† THOMSON'S Winter.

‡ Theſe, doubtleſs are “the Doors and the Bars,” which the ALMIGHTY mentions in the Courſe of his

of conflicting Winds, and the ponderous Sweep of dashing Surges.—Not that the Omnipotent ENGINEER has any Need of these impregnable Ramparts. *Here*, it is true, they intervene; and not only repress the rolling Invader, but speak the amazing Majesty of their MAKER. In *other* Places, all such laboured Methods of Fortification are laid aside. The CREATOR shews the astonished World, that He is confined to no Expedients; but orders all Things according to the Pleasure of his own Will. He bids a low Bank of despicable Sand, receive and repel the most furious Shocks of assaulting Seas: And, *though the Waves thereof toss themselves with incredible Fierceness, yet can they not prevail; though they roar, and seem to menace universal Destruction, yet can they not pass over* \* this slightest of Mounds.

A winding Passage broke the Declivity of the Descent; and led me, by a gradual Slope, to the Bottom.—The Moon being in her last Quarter, and the Tide at its greatest Recess, I walked for a while, where briny Waves were wont to flow.—The ebbing Waters had left a vacant Space, several Furlongs broad; equal in Length, to a very extended Vista; smooth on its Surface, as the most level Bowling-green; and almost as firm, as the best compact-

ed  
 awful Interrogatories to Job. The *massy* Doors, which can never be forced; the *solid* Bars, which can never be broke; and I may add, the *conspicuous* Columns on which His Providence has inscribed that sovereign Mandate, *No plus ultra*. Or, as the Prohibition runs in his own majestic Words, *Hitherto shalt thou go, but no farther*. Job. xxxviii. 10.

Jer. v. 22. *These boundless doors and bars shall not be shut, nor shall the gates be closed, nor shall the doors be locked, nor shall the bars be put in place, nor shall the gates be closed, nor shall the doors be locked, nor shall the bars be put in place.*



ed Causey. Infomuch, that the Tread of a Horse scarce impresses it, and the Waters of the Sea never penetrate it. Exclusive of this wise Contrivance, the searching Waves would insinuate themselves into the Heart of the Earth. The Earth itself would be *hollow* as an Honey-Comb, or *bibulous* as a Sponge. And the Sea, soking by degrees through all its Cavities, would, in Process of Time, forsake its Bed, and mingle with the Plains and Mountains. But this closely cemented or glutinous Kind of Pavement, is like *claying* the Bottom of the universal Canal. So that the returning Tides consolidate, rather than perforate its Substance, and prevent the Sun from cleaving it with Chinks.—Such, I hope, will be the Case, with this Soul of mine, and the Temptations that beset me. Beset me they do, they will. But may they never *win* upon my Affections, nor gain *Admittance* into my Heart ! Let them make me humble, and keep me vigilant ; teach me to walk closely with my GOD, and urge me to an incessant Dependence on *CHRIST*. Then, instead of being *ruinous*, they may become *advantageous* ; and instead of shattering, will only cleanse the Rock, on which they dash.

The mighty Waters, restless even in their utmost Tranquility, with a solemn \* but placid Murmur,

G 3

struck

\* This is described with inimitable Propriety by HOMER ;

Ἐν δ' αὖτις ὡς αἰὲρ ὅμιλος ἀνέμους ἁλμασσιν.

And only not quite so beautifully by MILTON ;

He said ; and as the Sound of Waters deep  
Hoarse Murmur echo'd to his Words Applause.

struck my Ear. The Billows, sometimes advancing to kiss the Sand ; sometimes drawing back their curly Heads into the Deep ; whitened, at their Extremities, into an agreeable Foam. Which, with the reflexive Representation of the azure Canopy, formed the Appearance of, a most spacious floating Mantle, tinged with a beautiful Blue, and edged with Fringes of Silver.—*Dignity* and *Elegance*, I find, are the inseparable Characteristics of the CREATOR's Workmanship. As *Comfort* and *Happiness*, I sometimes perceive, are the very Spirit of his Gospel, and the genuine Produce of his Commands.

On one Side, the *Atlantic Main* rolled its Surges from World to World.—*Immense, immense* Diffusion of Waters ! What a Spectacle of Magnificence and Terror ! What an irresistible Incitement to Reverence and Awe ! How it fills the Mind, and amazes the Imagination ! 'Tis the grandest and most august Object under the whole Heavens.—It reminds me of that apocalyptic Vision, which *John*, the inraptured Seer, beheld ! *As it were a great Mountain burning with Fire, was cast into the Sea, and the third Part of the Sea became Blood ; and the third Part of the Creatures which were in the Sea, and had Life, died ; and the third Part of the Ships were destroyed*\*. I have not Penetration enough, to discover the spiritual Meaning of this Passage ; but, I discern a most dreadful Grandeur, in its plain and literal Sense.—If We consider the wonderful Compass, and the terrible Force of such an enormous Mass of Fire ; if We consider its horrible and destructive Effects, on such

\* Rev. viii. 8, 9.

such a vast Body of Waters, as the third Part of the Ocean; how tremendous and astonishing is the Idea! Surely, nothing but divine Inspiration could suggest these Images; as none but an Almighty BEING can execute this Vengeance. Who would not fear an eternal KING, that has such Weapons and such Artillery, *reserved against the Day of Battle and War* \*.

Spacious as the Sea is, GOD has provided a *Garment*, to cover it. Profound as the Sea is, GOD has prepared *swadling Bands*, to inwrap it. Ungovernable as it may seem to Us, He over-rules it with as much Ease, as the Nurse manages a new-born *Infant* †. An Infant it is, before Almighty Power; and to an Infant it is compared, by JEHOVAH Himself: though, to our Apprehension, it raves like a *stupendous Madman*.—But if He command, it opens a peaceful Bosom, and receives his People. It smoothes the Way for their Passage, and stands as a Bulwark for their Defence. They march *through the midst of the Sea upon dry Ground, and the Waters are a Wall unto them on their Right-hand and on their left* ‡. If he reverses his Mandate, they drive down, with an irresistible Sweep, upon the Hosts of *Pharaoh*; and overwhelm the Chariots and Horses of *Egypt*. They pour Confusion upon *Arrogance* ||, and

\* Job xxxviii. 23. † Job xxxviii. 8, 9. ‡ Exod. xiv. 22.

|| *Arrogance*—This is described with exquisite Delicacy, in the *Exultation* or triumphant Song of *Moses*. *The Enemy said, I will pursue; I will overtake; I will divide the Spoil; my Lust shall be satisfied upon them: I will draw my Sword, mine Hand shall destroy them.*—What swelling Words



and disappoint the Designs of Persecution and Cruelty.—If he says, *Be still*: the bellowing Surges are hushed; and the gentlest Lamb is not so quiet. If He says, *Destroy*: even the quiescent Waters kindle into Rage; they rise in their MAKER's Cause; and ten thousand Lions, stung with Hunger, and rushing upon their Prey, are not so fierce. When He bids them execute any other Commission; the Horse broke to the Bit, the Spaniel disciplined to the Signal, are not half so dutiful and obsequious.—And shall our Passions be more wild than the Winds, more turbulent than the Billows? Forbid it, Almighty LORD! Thou that *rulest the Raging of the Sea; and the Noise of his Waves*, restrain, subdue, and calm the Madness of the People.

The Eye travels hard. It wanders over a vast, vast Length of fluctuating Plains\*. It reaches the Limits of the Hemisphere, where Skies and Waves seem to mingle. Yet it has scarce made an Entry upon the World of Waters. What I here discern, is no more than the Skirts of the great and wide Sea. Tracts incomparably broader, are still behind; and

Tracts

Words of Vanity are here! The very Spirit of a *Thraſo* breathes in every Syllable of this beautiful *Proſopopœia*. Never was the Language of *Bluster*, *Feroſity*, and *Rhodomontade*, so finely mimicked.—How noble is the Turn, and how exalted the Sentiment, which follows! *THOU didst blow with thy Wind; the Sea covered them; they sank as Lead in the mighty Waters.* The GOD of Israel need not summon all his Power, or level the right-aiming Thunder-bolts; He only blows with his Wind, and the great Mountain breaks like a Bubble. All this insolent and formidable Parade is quashed; sinks into Nothing; expires in Shame and Ruin. *Exod. xv. 9, 10.*

————— *Campolque natantes.* LUCRET.



Tracts of unbounded Extent are behind even those, —Great then, O my Soul, inconceivably great, is that adored and glorious SOVEREIGN, who sitteth upon this Flood, as upon a Throne \*. Nay, Who holds it, diffused as it is from Pole to Pole, in the Hollow of his Hand; and before whom, in all its prodigious Dimensions, it is but as the Drop of a Bucket.—How shall Reptiles of the Ground sink *low enough* in their own Apprehensions! What Humiliation can be sufficiently deep for sinful Mortals, before this “High and Holy ONE!” Yet how may they *rise* on the Wings of Hope! How may they *soar* on the Pinions of Faith! When, in the Language of his Prophet, and in his own SON’s Name, they thus address the everlasting GOD. *Awake! Awake! Put on Strength, O Arm of the LORD! Awake, for our Succour and Security, as in the antient Days, in the Generations of old. Art Thou not it, that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon? Art Thou not it, which hath dried the Sea, the Waters of the great Deep? That hath made the Depths of the Sea, a Way for the Ransomed to pass over †?*

How grand, surprisngly grand and majestic, are the *Works*, as well as the Attributes of an Omnipotent BEING! What are all the Canals in all the Countries of the Earth, compared with this immense Reservatory! What are all the superb Edifices, erected by royal Munificence, compared with yonder Concave of the Skies! And what are the most pompous Illuminations of Theatres and triumphant Cities, compared with the resplendent Source  
of

\* Psal. xxix. 10.

† Isa. li. 9, 10.

of Day! They are a *Spark*, an *Atom*, a *Drop*.—Nay, in every Spark, and Atom, and Drop, which proceeds from the Hand of the ALMIGHTY, there is the Manifestation of a Wisdom and a Power absolutely incomprehensible.

Let us examine a single Drop of Water, the very least Quantity, that the Eye can discern; only so much, as will just adhere to the Point of a Needle. In this almost imperceptible Speck, a famous Philosopher computes no less than *thirteen thousand* Globules. Amazing to conceive! Impossible to explicate!—If then in so small a Speck, abundantly more than ten thousand Globules exist, what Myriads of Myriads must float in the unmeasured Extent of the Ocean!—Let the ablest Arithmetician try to comprehend in his Mind, not the internal Constitution, but only the *Number* of these fluid Particles. As well may He grasp the Winds in his Fist, or mete out the Universe with his Span, as execute the Task.—If then We are utterly unable to number (which is the *most superficial* of all Researches) even the most common Works of the great JEHOVAH; how can We pretend to lay open the Secrets, and penetrate the Recesses of his infinite Mind! How can We pretend to investigate the whole Process, and solve all the Difficulties, of that *highest* and *deepest* of the divine Schemes, REDEMPTION!

I have sometimes been offended, I must confess, when You have enlarged upon the *mysterious* Truths of *Christianity*. But I perceive, the Beam was in my own Eye, when I fancied, the Mote was in my Friend's. Is there, in every Ray of Light, and in every Particle of Matter, a Depth of Contrivance unfa-

unfathomable by the Line of any human Understanding? And shall there be nothing abstruse or profound, nothing but what is level to our scanty Apprehensions, in the great \* Things of GOD's Law, and the glorious † Things of his Gospel? To expect this, is just as wise in itself, and just as congruous to Nature, as to expect—a Sea, whose Cavities might have been digged by our Spade—a Sky, whose Arches are measurable by our Compass—a Sun, whose Orb may be included in our Lanthorns.

When therefore I read of ONE uncreated and eternal BEING, subsisting in THREE Divine PERSONS; when I hear of an infinitely pure and perfect GOD, made Flesh for the Redemption of sinful Men; when I meditate on the righteous and universal JUDGE, reconciling the World unto Himself, by the Death of his own SON;—when a thousand curious and inquisitive Thoughts are ready to arise on the Occasion; I will bid them first sound the Depths of a single Drop, and then apply their Plummet to the boundless Ocean. This, I am very sure, is not weak Credulity, nor wild Enthusiasm; but the maturest Dictate of Reason, and the very Precision of Truth.—Let then the great CREATOR make that sublime Declaration; *As the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my Ways, than your Ways; and my Thoughts than your Thoughts ‡.* Let every human Creature add that humble Acknowledgment; *O the Depths of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of GOD! How unsearchable*  
are

\* רבי תורת, Hof. viii. 12.

† Τα μεγαλεια του Θεου, Acts ii. 11.

‡ Isa. lv. 9.

are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out.\*  
And not Devotion only, but Reason and Truth, will  
say *Amen* to both.

You see, *Aspasio*, how I am trying to adopt your  
Spirit. You will observe the willing Scholar, though  
not the great Proficient.—But stay! Is this right?  
To divert from such commanding Subjects, and take  
notice of mere Punctilios?—My Friend may spare  
his Frowns. I am surpris'd and angry at myself.  
Away with the little Arts of Self-recommendation.  
Self should be forgot, should be *swallowed up* and  
*lost* in devout Astonishment, when We are viewing  
the Magnificence, and meditating on the Wonders  
of Creation.

Behind me, and far off to the North, *Cambria's*  
dusky Coasts just, and but just, emerged. Lost were  
all her Woods and Mountains. Instead of orna-  
mented Towns, and cultivated Plains, a *confused*  
Mist, or a low-hung Cloud, seemed to hover on the  
Ocean's remotest Brim.—*Behind me!* Remembrance  
is roused at the Expression, and Conscience sharpens  
her Sting. Ah! how often and how long, have I  
treated in this very Manner, the noblest Scenes, and  
the sublimest Joys! Have *turned my Back*—ungrate-  
ful and besotted Creature!—upon the heavenly  
Country, and wandered from the Regions of infinite  
Delight! Therefore now they appear *dim*. I have  
scarcely a Glimpse of their transcendent Excellencies.  
Or if I see them by Faith, it is with frequent Inter-  
missions, and much Obscurity.—Turn me, O Thou  
GOD of my Salvation, turn me from pursuing  
Phantoms,

\* Rom. xi. 33.



Phantoms, and attach me to thy blessed Self. Let me henceforth steer an invariable Course to E-M-MANUEL's Kingdom. May its Treasures, as I advance, *open to my View*, and its Glories *brighten in my Eye*. O! may some Odours, better, far better, than *Sabæan* spicy Odours\*, exhale from the delectable Hills, and the celestial Shores!— But chiefly thou eternal SPIRIT breathe upon my Soul, both by thy *convincing and comforting* Influences! Nor ever cease to swell my Sails, and speed my Progress; till I arrive at the Land, *that is very far off*; and see the KING, the KING of Grace and of Glory, in all his ineffable Beauty†.

On my Left-hand, a Range of *mountainous Cliffs* rose in a perpendicular Direction. The huge Pile extended, as far as the Sight could discern, its black Boundaries. Here, bending inwards to the Land; there, bellying out into the Deep; every where projecting a Shade, several Leagues a-cross the Ocean.

The Height of these Cliffs so prodigious, that every human Creature who comes near the Summit, starts back *terrified and aghast*. Only a few straggling Goats venture to graze on the Top: and these, to a Person walking below, appear but as Specks of moving

\* Alluding to these Lines in MILTON.

*As when to them who sail  
Beyond the Cape of Hope, and now are past  
Mofambic, off at Sea North-east Winds blow  
Sabæan Odour, from the spicy Shore  
Of Araby the blest, and many a League  
Clear'd with the grateful Smell old Ocean smiles.*

Book IV. 159.

† Isa. xxxiii. 17.

ing White. While the Sea-mews, that winnow the Air about the middle Steep, look like winged Animalcules, pursuing their little Sports in a different Region.—The *Aspect* of these Cliffs so *wild* and *horrid*, it is impossible to behold them without a shivering Dread. The Spectator is apt to imagine, that Nature had formerly suffered some violent Convulsions, or been shattered by the flaming Bolts; and that these are the dismembered Remains of the dreadful Stroke. The Ruins, not of *Persepolis* or *Palmyra*, but of the World!

Amazing! What adventurous daring Creature is yonder, gathering *Samphire* from the Cavities of the Rocks! He has let Himself down several Fathom, beneath the black and dizzy Summit.—He gleans a poor Livelihood, from the Edges of Danger, shall I say? Rather, from the *Jaws* of *Death*. I cannot discern the Rope, to which He clings. He seems to be suspended over the tremendous Precipice, by a Thread, by a Hair, by Nothing.—I'll look no longer. The very Sight chills my Veins. While I view his perilous Elevation, I can think of nothing but a headlong Downfal, and fractured Bones; of Brains left to reek on the pointed Crag, and Blood streaming on the discoloured Beach.

Suppose (if the Mind can bear so shocking a Supposition) some poor Wretch, *exposed* on the Brow of this stupendous Promontory; without any Support for his Feet; and *cleaving* only to a weak slender Shrub, which but just adheres to the Interstices of the Rock. What tumultuous Throbbings seize his Breast? What a dying Paleness invades his Cheeks? And what Agonies of Fear rend his Heart? As He hangs,

Let. 9. THERON to ASPASIO. III

hangs, *projecting over* the ragged Precipice; and surveys the Ocean deep, wondrous deep below!—The Bough gives way. His only Hope fails. It yields more and more to his Weight. Good Heavens! *He sinks! He sinks!* O! for some friendly Hand, to snatch him from perishing! Millions, Millions of Gold, were the cheap Purchase of such a Mercy.—There was a Time, my Soul, when thou wast in a Situation, equally shall I say? Infinitely more dangerous. Tottering, not only on the *Verge of Life*, but on the very *Brink of Hell*. Remember that compassionate Arm, which was stretched out, in the very Article of Need, to rescue Thee from imminent and everlasting Perdition. Never forget that gracious Voice, which said—in Accents sweeter than the Music of the Seraphic Choir—“ Deliver him from going down into the Pit. Let his Health be restored, and his Day of Grace be prolonged.”

In some Places, the hideous Ruins not only *tower* to the Skies, but *lean* over the Strand. Prominent and frightfully pendulous, they nod Horror, and threaten Destruction on all below. A Person congratulates Himself, when He has got clear of the bending Precipice; and can hardly forbear thinking, that the enormous Load is with-held by some unseen Hand, till the *execrable Wretch*, doomed to a most astonishing Vengeance, is come within Reach of the Blow. And truly, if he had the Strength of the Elephant, or the Firmness of the Behemoth, this must grind Him to Powder, or even crush Him into Atoms.

How

How awful to consider, that there is a Day coming, when wicked Potentates, and haughty Monarchs, will beg of yonder Seas, to *yawn* compassionately deep, and hide them in their darkest Abysses; hide them from the piercing Eye, and avenging Sword, of inflexible Justice.—That there is a Day coming, when the soft Voluptuary, the wanton Beauty, and all the Ungodly of the Earth, will beseech those tremendous Ridges, with all their unsupportable Burden of craggy Rocks, to *rush down* upon their guilty Heads\*. If, by this means, they may be screened from the infinitely more dreaded Weight of divine Indignation.

Vain are their Cries; and vainer still would be their Refuge, should their passionate Requests be granted. Can Floods *conceal* the impious Wretches; when the Caverns of the Ocean shall be laid bare, and the Foundations of the World be discovered? Can Rocks *secrete* an obnoxious Rebel; when Rocks, with all their marble Quarries, and adamantine Entrails, shall dissolve like melting Wax? When Hills, that plunge their Roots to the Center, and lose their towering Heads in Air, shall start from their affrighted Base†, and flee away like a withered Leaf!—

Good

\* Rev. iv. 15, 16.

† This brings to our Remembrance a most sublime Description of the Divine POWER, which arises in a beautiful Climax, and terminates in this grand Idea: *The Voice of the LORD is mighty in Operation, the Voice of the LORD is a glorious Voice. The Voice of the LORD breaketh the Cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon. He maketh them also to skip like a Calf; Lebanon and Sirion like a young Unicorn.* Psal. xxix. 4, 5, 6.

The



Good GOD \*! What racking Anguish must they feel! What inexpressibly severer Torment must they fear! Who can implore, ardently implore as a most desirable Favour, what Imagination itself shudders to conceive.

In

*The Voice of the LORD is mighty in Operation.* This is the general Proposition; which, in the following Sentences, We see most magnificently illustrated.—*The Voite of the LORD breaketh the Cedars*; when He speaks in Thunder, and bids the Lightning execute his Orders, the Trees, the Cedar Trees, those sturdiest Productions of the Earth, are shivered to pieces.—*Yea, the LORD breaketh the Cedars of Lebanon*; which, for Stateliness and Strength, surpass the Oaks of the Forest, surpass every Tree of the Field, almost as much as the Oak exceeds a Shrub.—It is a small Thing with JEHOVAH, to rend the Trunks, to tear up the Roots, and make those massy Bodies *skip like a Calf*; even Lebanon and Sirion, the Mountains on which they grow, tremble before their GOD. They are thrown into strange Com-motions; they are ready to spring from their Foundations; and, with all their Load of Woods and Rocks, appear like some affrighted or some sportive Animal, that starts with Horror, or leaps with Exultation.

\* *Good GOD!*—This Exclamation is introduced on a very serious Occasion, and used with an apparent Air of Reverence. Under which Circumstances, perhaps, it may be *sometimes* allowable, and not dishonourable to the Divine MAJESTY. But, when it is admitted into ordinary Conversation, on trifling Occurrences, and with a Levity of Temper; it is itself a very great Offence, and discovers a very irreligious Spirit.—It is so *great an Offence*, that the GOD of Heaven and Earth declares Himself the Avenger of all such Transgressors. *He will not hold them guiltless*, or he will assuredly punish them. And if GOD condemn, who shall acquit? If HE will punish, who can deliver from his Hand?—It discovers a *very irreligious Spirit*; is a most dangerous Symptom; somewhat like a Plague-Spot on the Conversation. It

In some Places, these mountainous Declivities lift their Brow aloft; plant their Basis deep; and, instead of *portending* a Fall, *defy* the Fury of the most impetuous Elements. Firmly consolidated, and steadfastly established, they have withstood the united, the repeated Assaults of Winds and Waves, through a long Series of revolving Ages.—The sacred Writers, I observe, select almost all the striking Images, which the whole Creation affords; in order to communicate their heavenly Ideas, with the greatest Advantage. *Isaiah*, describing the *Security* of the Righteous, takes his Comparison from the grand Spectacle before my Eyes. *He shall dwell on high: his Place of Defence shall be the Munitions of Rocks* \*; inaccessible as those lofty Ridges, immoveable as their everlasting Foundations.

Should it be asked, what these Munitions of Rocks may signify?—I find two Places of Refuge and Safeguard, pointed out in Scripture; to either of which, I believe, the Metaphor is applicable. *He had Horns*, says one of the divine Pindarics, *coming out of his Hand: there was the Hiding of his Power* †.

Uncon-  
shews, that there is no saving Health, no Life of GOD in the Soul. Was there any Sensibility in the Conscience, any Grace in the Heart, it would be impossible to treat so wantonly and so presumptuously, *that glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD*. Deut. xxviii. 58.

\* *Isa. xxxiii. 16.*  
† *Habak. iii. 4.* Horns were an Emblem of Strength. A Horn of Salvation, is put for a mighty and effectual Salvation. *Luke ii. 69.* *Thou hast heard me from among the Horns of the Unicorns*; Thou hast rescued me from the most potent and formidable Enemies. *Psal. xxii. 21.* Here the Word seems to denote that Power of JEHO-  
VAH,

Uncontroulable and omnipotent Power was lodged in the great JEHOVAH's Hand; and this was the sure Defence, this the impregnable Garrison, for all his People.—The Church of CHRIST is said to be *in the Clefts of the Rock*\*: That *spiritual Rock*, of which the *Israelites* drank in the Wilderness; whose sacred Clefts were opened, when the bloody Spear tore up the REDEEMER's Side, and cut a wide

H 2 and

VAH, to which nothing is impossible. And more than seems, if We consult the next Clause.—*There was the hiding of his Power*; or, as it may be rendered, *his powerful Hiding*, a most secure Refuge, a Sanctuary absolutely inviolable. I have accommodated this Passage to a different Sense, *Meditat. Vol. I. p. 183*. But the true Signification, most suitable to the Context, and most subservient to the Prophet's Design, is, I apprehend, given by *Theron*. It is somewhat like an exalted Sentiment in the *Night-Thoughts*; which, with a small Alteration, may serve as a Paraphrase on the Text:

*And Nature's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.*

*A Christian's Shield the Hollow of his Hand.*

\* *Cant. ii. 14*. Should the Reader have an Inclination to see this sacred, but mysterious Book explained, I would refer him to Dr. GILL's *Exposition of the Canticles*. Which has such a copious Vein of sanctified Invention running through it, and is interspersed with such a Variety of delicate and brilliant Images, as cannot but highly entertain a *curious* Mind Which presents Us also with such rich and charming Displays of the Glory of CHRIST's Person, the Freeness of his Grace to Sinners, and the Tenderness of his Love to the Church, as cannot but administer the most exquisite Delight to the *believing* Soul.—Considered in *both* these Views, I think, the Work resembles the *Paradisaical Garden*, described by MILTON; in which

*Blossoms and Fruits at once of golden Hue  
Appear'd, with gay enamel'd Colours mix'd.*



and deadly Passage to his Heart. Surely, *the Inhabitants of this Rock* have Reason to sing \*. What should disquiet them? Who can destroy them? Why should not the Voice of Joy be in their Dwellings, and that Hymn of holy Triumph, in their Mouths? *We have a strong City. Salvation hath GOD appointed, Salvation itself, for Walls and Bulwarks* †. —Happy should I think myself, if I was interested in this SAVIOUR, and established on this Rock.

Yonder, on the Summit of the most conspicuous Cliff, is erected a grand and stately Pile. At the Top, my Glass discovers a superb Lanthorn; at the Foot, are the Huts of Fishermen, surrounded with various Sorts of Nets.—It is, I suppose, a *Light-house*. Intended to apprise the Sailor, of devouring Gulfs, and destructive Sholes; or else to conduct Him, into a safe Road, and secure Harbour.

Both the Situation and Design of the Building read me a Lesson: the one of awful Admonition, the other of comfortable Instruction.—*Comfortable Instruction*. How massy and ponderous is the Edifice! Yet, there is not the least Reason to be apprehensive of a Failure in the Foundation. Was the Structure ten thousand times larger, the solid Rock would support it, with the utmost Ease, and the utmost Steadiness. Such is *CHRIST*, such are his Merits, such his glorious Righteousness, to those wise and blessed Souls, who rest all the Weight of their everlasting Interests on Him alone. *Such*, did I say? Much surer. *For the Mountains may depart, and the Hills may be removed* ‡; but this divine Basis can never sink, can never be shaken.—*Awful Admonition*. For, it recalls

to

\* Isa. xlii. 11.

† Isa. xxvi. 1.

‡ Isa. liv. 10.



to my Memory that alarming, yet welcome Text\*, which You styled the spiritual Light-house. Which has been as serviceable to my distressed Mind and bewildered Thoughts, as such an illuminated Watch-tower to the wandering and benighted Mariner. May I often view it ! Ever attend to its faithful Direction ! And be led by its Influences, into the Haven, the desired Haven of Peace and Salvation !

Let me once again survey those vast but noble Deformities ; those rude but majestic Elevations of Stone.—*Fortifications*, reared by an Almighty Hand, to protect Us at once from warring Elements, and invading Enemies.—*Ramparts*, which overlook and command the Ocean ; which, viewed by distant Mariners, seem to touch and prop the Sky. Which have surrounded our Isle ever since the universal Deluge, and will be her never-failing Defence even to the general Conflagration.—If some opinionated Engineer should take it into his Head, to suspect the Stability of these unshaken and everlasting Bulwarks : if He should make Proposals for strengthening them with Buttresses, or girding them round with Cramping-Irons ! How would his Project be received ? With Approbation and Applause ? Or with Contempt and Indignation ? “ Fool that He is ! To “ think of enlarging, corroborating, or improving “ the *finished* and *magnificent* Works of Nature, by “ the *puny* Piddlings of Art ! ”—Such, so foolish and preposterous was my once favourite Conceit, of adding my own Performances, in order to increase the justifying Efficacy of *CHRIST*’s Obedience.

H. 3

What

\* See Rom. ix. 30, 31, 32. and Vol. II. Letter V.

What a Disparagement was this to the great the divine Foundation! Which, for the Support and Security of burdened and indangered Sinners, is *sufficient*—is *self-sufficient*—is *all-sufficient*.

How *changeable* is the Face of this liquid Element! Not long ago, there was nothing, from this stony Boundary, to the Horizon's utmost Verge, but the wildest Tumult and most horrible Confusion. Now, the stormy Flood has smoothed its rugged Brow, and the watery Upore is lulled into a profound Tranquillity. Where *rolling Mountains* rushed and raged, threatening to dash the Clouds, and deluge the Earth; there the *gentlest Undulations* play, and only just wrinkle the Surface of the mighty Bason. Where the dreadful Abyfs opened its wide and unfathomable Jaws, to swallow up the trembling Sailor, and his shattered Vessel; there a calm and clear Expanse diffuses its ample Bosom, alluring the Fish to bask in the Sun, and inviting the Sea-fowl to watch for their Prey.

In this fair floating Mirror, I see the Picture of every Cloud, which passes through the Regions of the Sky. But in its uncertain and treacherous Temperature, I see more plainly the inconstant and ever-variable Condition of human Affairs.—I durst not be Surety to the Mariner, for peaceful Seas and soothing Gales. I could not ascertain the Continuance of this halcyon Weather, so much as a single Day, or even to the next Hour. And let me not fondly promise myself an *uninterrupted* Tenor of Serenity in my Mind, or of Prosperity in my Circumstances.—

Some-

Sometimes, indeed, my Heart exults under the Smile of Heaven, and the Favour of GOD. But soon; ah! too soon I am clouded with Fear, and oppressed with Corruption. I sigh out that passionate Acknowledgment, *Wretched Man that I am!* And add that wishful Inquiry, *Who shall deliver me?*—For this disordered State of Things, the afflicted Patriarch's Complaint, is the most apposite Motto, and the most wholesome Memento; *Changes and War are around me* \*.—But there is a World, where disastrous Revolutions will be known no more. Where our Enjoyments will no longer *fluctuate* like the Ocean, but be more steadfast than the Rocks, and more immoveable than the Shores.

Here, I see an immense Collection of Waters, in a State of deep Repose. Could I extend my View to some remoter Tracts, I should behold every Thing smoother and calmer still. Not a Furrow sinks, nor a Ridge swells, the Surface of the Ocean. 'Tis all like a glassy Plain. The Waves are asleep. Echo is hushed. Not a Gale stirs. The Sea stagnates; the Mariner is *becalmed*; and the Vessel scarcely creeps.—Whereas, could I survey the Straits of *Magellan*, or the Gut of *Gibraltar*, I should find a very striking Difference. There, the Waters press in with Vehemence, and rush forwards with Impetuosity. All is there in strong Agitation, and rapid Progress. The Ship is *whirled* through the narrow Passage; and rides, as it were, on the Wheels of the Surge, or on the Wings of the Wind.—This, my dear *Aspasio*, is a true Image of what I have been, and of what I

H 4

am.



am. Some Months ago, when I was insensible of Guilt, all my Prayers were listless, and all my Religion was a spiritual Lethargy. I felt not in my Heart, what I uttered with my Tongue. *Hofannahs* were but an empty Ceremony, and Confessions froze on my formal Lips.—But, since the SPIRIT of GOD has awakened me from my Dream, and convinced me of my Sinfulness, I can no longer be satisfied with indolent and yawning Devotions. Tryals and Temptations put strong Cries into my Mouth. My Soul mourns before the LORD: my Desires plead with the Blessed GOD: and I am ready to say, as the Patriarch of old, “I cannot, I must not, *I will not let Thee go, unless Thou blest me* \*.”

I see no Flocks of Sheep, with sober Affiduity, nibbling the grassy Plains. No sportive Lambs, with innocent Gaiety, frisking along the sunny Banks. Here are no Stables for the generous Steed, nor Pastures for the lusty Heifer. Nevertheless, these watery Regions are stocked with Colonies of *proper* and *peculiar* Inhabitants.—Who are clothed and accoutred in exact Conformity to the Clime. Not in swelling Wool, or buoyant Feathers; not in a flowing Robe, or a full-trimmed Suit; but with as much Compactness, and with as little Superfluity, as possible. They are clad, or rather *sheathed* in *Scales*: which adhere closely to their Bodies, and are always laid in a Kind of natural Oil. Than which Apparel nothing can be more *light*, and at the same Time nothing  
more

\* Gen. xxxii. 26.



more *solid*. It hinders the Fluid from penetrating their Flesh; it prevents the Cold from coagulating their Blood; and enables them to make their way through the Waters, with the utmost Facility.— They have each a curious Instrument \*, by which they increase or diminish their specific Gravity: sink like Lead, or float like a Cork; rise to what Height, or descend to what Depth, they please.

This is the Abode of *Leviathan*, hugest of living Creatures. Before whom the broad-limbed Elephant, and the tall-necked Camel, are mere Shrimps. A stretched-out Promontory, when He sleeps; a moving Island, when He swims; “making the Sea to boil like a Pot,” when unweildily wallowing, He takes his prodigious Pastime.—Here the voracious *Shark*, that Tyrant of the fluid Kingdoms, and Assassin of the finny Nations, roams and commits his Ravages: imbrues his horrid Fangs, and marks his rapid Path, with Blood.—Here dwelt that *great*, and greatly surprising *Fish*, whose Fierceness and Avidity the Almighty SOVEREIGN employed as his Pursuivant, to arrest a fugitive Prophet. Whose ample Jaws, or capacious Entrails, were the Dungeon to confine a rebellious Subject, and the Cabin to lodge a penitent Offender. Whose Bulk and Strength and Speed were a kind of Vessel, transporting this Convict to the *Bottom of the Mountains, and the Bars of the Earth* †. After the Criminal was sufficiently chastised, and properly humbled, they served as a Galley with Oars, to convey Him safe to Land.

In

\* The Air-bladder.

† Jonah ii. 6.

In the same Element resides, (at least takes up Part of his Residence) that formidable Monster, who is made without Fear, and *has not his like upon Earth*. He esteemeth the pointed Iron as Straw, and ponderous Brass as rotten Wood. His Heart is as hard as a Piece of the nether Millstone, and his Scales are a Coat of impenetrable Mail. Strength not to be resisted, much less to be subdued, lies intrenched in his sinewy Neck. His Eyes are like the Eyelids of the opening Day; and when He rolls those glaring Orbs, there seems to be another Morn risen on Mid-noon. His Teeth are terrible, jagged for Rapine, and edged with Death. His Throat is as a burning Furnace; Clouds of Smoke are poured from his Nostrils, and Flakes of Fire issue from his Mouth. None, no not the most resolute, dares provoke Him to the Combat, or even stir Him up from his Slumbers. He laugheth at the shaking of the spear, and Sorrow marcheth in Triumph before Him\*.

When-

\* *Job xli. 22.* תרוע ראה לפני *Meror*, says Bockart, *præcedit tanquam Metator & Comes, tumidique Antecambulo Regis*. Terror and Anguish are a kind of *advanced Guard* to this Monarch among the Reptiles. Or, they go before the Monster, as the Man bearing a Shield went before the *Philistine* Giant.—The original Word occurs in no other Part of the divine Book. I cannot recollect any Expression, which so fully represents its Meaning, as *Homer's* *ἄνδρῶν*, or *Xenophon's* *γᾶντασσαι*; both which are intended to describe the Ardour and Action of a high-mettled prancing Steed.—The whole Paragraph is a Sketch of the *Crocodile's* Picture. It exhibits a few Circumstances, culled from that inimitable Description, extant in the *Book of Job*. Which are given, either in the sacred Writer's own Words, or else in a *paraphrastic* Explanation of their Sense.

Whenever He raiseth Himself, the Mighty are afraid; where-ever He advanceth, Ruin is there.—If a mere Creature is capable of spreading such Alarm and Dread; how *greatly* is the CREATOR himself to be feared! Who can turn the most harmless Inhabitant of the Ocean, into a ravenous Alligator, or a horrid Crocodile! Who can arm every Reptile of the Ground, with all the Force and Rage of a Lion!

'Tis impossible to enter on the Muster-roll, those scaly Herds, and that minuter Fry, which graze the Sea-weed, or stray through the coral Groves. They are innumerable, as the Sands which lie under them; countless, as the Waves which cover them.—Here are uncouth Animals, of *monstrous* Shapes\*, and  
amazing

\* *Monstrous Shapes*—Such as the *Sword-fish*; whose upper Jaw is lengthened into a strong and sharp Sword. With which he sometimes ventures to attack the Ships, though armed with Thunder: and is capable of piercing their Sides, though ribbed with Oak. This may be called the *Champion* of the Waters. Who, though never exceeding sixteen Feet in Length, yet, confiding in a Weapon at once so trusty and so tremendous, scruples not to give Battle even to the Whale Himself.—The *Sun-fish* has no Tail; seems to be all Head; and was it not for two Fins, which act the Part of Oars, would be one intire round Mass of Flesh.—The *Polypus*, remarkable for its numerous Feet, and as many Claws; by which it has the Appearance of a mere Insect, and seems fitted only to crawl. At the same Time, an Excrecence, arising on the Back, enables it to steer and pursue a steady Course in the Waves. So that it may pass under the two-fold Character of a *Sailor* and a *Reptile*.—*Horace* intimates, that the *British* Ocean is famous for producing Sea-monsters;

*Te belluosus qui remotis  
Obstrepat Oceanus Britannis.*



*amazing* Qualities \*. Some that have been discovered by the inquisitive Eye of Man; and many more, that remain among the Secrets of the hoary Deep.—Here are Sholes and Sholes, of various Characters, and of the most diversified Sizes; from the *cumbrous* Whale, whose Flouncings tempest the Ocean, to the *evanescent* Anchovy, whose Substance dissolves in the smallest Fricassee.—Some, lodged in their pearly Shells, and fattening on their rocky Beds, seem attentive to no higher Employ, than that of imbibing moist Nutriment. These, but a small Remove

\* *Amazing Qualities*—Among these may be reckoned the *Torpedo*, which benumbs on a sudden, and renders impotent, whatever Fish it assaults. And, which is a more extraordinary Property, strikes even the Fisherman's Arm, when He offers to lay hold on it, with a temporary Deadness. By this means, it possesses the double Advantage, of arresting its Prey, and securing itself.—The *Cuttle fish*, furnished with a liquid Magazine, of a Colour and Consistence like Ink. Which, when pursued by an Enemy, the Creature emits, and blackens the Water. By this Artifice, the Foe is bewildered in the Chace; and while the One vainly gropes in the Dark, the Other seizes the Opportunity, and makes his Escape.—The *Nautilus*, whose Shell forms a natural Boat. The dextrous Inhabitant unfurls a Membrane to the Wind, which serves him instead of a Sail. He extends also a Couple of Arms, with which, as with two slender Oars, He rows himself along. When He is disposed to dive, He strikes Sail; and, without any Apprehension of being drowned, sinks to the Bottom. When the Weather is calm, and He has an Inclination to see the World, or take his Pleasure, He mounts to the Surface; and, self-taught in the Art of Navigation, performs his Voyage without either Chart or Compass; is Himself the *Vessel*, the *Rigging*, and the *Pilot*.—For a more copious Illustration of this amusing and wonderful Subject, see *Nat. Disph* Vol. III.



Remove from vegetable Life, are almost rooted to the Rocks, on which they lie reposed. While others, active as the winged Creation, and swift as an Arrow from the *Indian* Bow, shoot along the yielding Flood, and range at large the spacious Regions of the Deep.

Here is the *Tortoise*, who never moves but under her own portable Pent-house. The *Lobster*, which, whether He sleeps or wakes, is still in a State of Defence, and clad in jointed Armour: The *Oyster*, a sort of living Jelly, ingarrisoned in the Bulwark of native Stone. With many other Kinds of Sea Reptiles, or, as the Psalmist speaks, *Things creeping innumerable* \*.—I am surprised at the Variety of their Figure, and charmed with the Splendor of their Colours. Unsearchable is the Wisdom, and endless the Contrivance, of the All-creating GOD! — Some are rugged in their Form, and little better than hideous in their Aspect. Their Shells seem to be the rude Production of a disorderly Jumble, rather than the regular Effects of Skill and Design. Yet We shall find, even in these *seeming* Irregularities, the *nicest* Dispositions. These Abodes, uncouth as they may appear, are adapted to the Genius of their respective Tenants, and exactly suited to their particular Exigencies. Neither the *Ionic* Delicacy, nor the *Corinthian* Richness, nor any other Order of Architecture, would have served their Purposes half so well, as this coarse and homely Fabric.

Some, on the other hand, are extremely neat, Their Structure is all Symmetry and Elegance. No  
Enamel

\* Psal. civ. 25.

Enamel in the World is comparable to their Polish. There's not a *Room of State*, in all the Palaces of *Europe*, so brilliantly adorned, as the Dining-room and the Bed-chamber of the little Fish, that dwells in *Mother of Pearl*. Such a lovely Mixture of Red, and Blue, and Green, so delightfully staining the most clear and glittering Ground, is no where else to be seen. The royal Power may covet it, and human Art may mimic it; but neither the one, nor the other, nor both united, will ever be able to equal it.

But what I admire more, than all their Streaks, their Spots, and their Embroidery, is, The extraordinary Provision made for their *Safety*.—Nothing is more relishing and palatable than their *Flesh*. Nothing more heavy and sluggish than their *Motions*. As they have no *Speed* to escape, neither have they any *Dexterity* to elude the *Foe*. Were they naked or unguarded, they must be an easy Prey to every *Free-booter*, that roams the *Ocean*.—To prevent this fatal Consequence, what is only *Clothing* to other Animals, is to them a *Clothing*, a *House*, and a *Castle*. They have a *Fortification*, that grows with their *Growth*, and is a *Part* of themselves. By this means, they live secure amidst Millions and Millions of ravenous Jaws: by this means, they are *imparked*, as it were, in their own *Shell*; and, screened from every other *Assault*, are reserved for the *Use* and *Pleasure* of Mankind.

This is the Birth-place of *Cod*, the standing Repast of *Lent*. This is the Nursery of *Turbot*, for its exquisite *Relish* justly styled, The *Pheasant* of the *Waters*. Hence comes the *Sturgeon*, delicious even in *Pickle*, and a *Regale* for royal *Luxury*: Hence  
the

the *Flounders* dappled with reddish Spots, and a Supply for vulgar Wants.—Here dwell the *Mackarel*, decked, when haled from their native Element, richly decked with the most glossy Dies; the *Herring*, whose Back is mottled with Azure, and his Belly sleek with Silver: the *Salmon*, in plainer Habit, but of larger Substance, and higher Esteem, than either or both the preceding.—These, when shotten and lean, wander wildly up and down the vast Abyss. When *plump* and *delicate*, they throng our Creeks, and swarm in our Bays: they repair to the Shallows, or haunt the running Streams.—Who bids these Creatures evacuate the Shores, and disperse themselves into all Quarters, when they become worthless and unfit for our Service? Who rallies and recalls the undisciplined Vagrants, as-soon as they are improved into desirable Food? Who appoints the very Scene of our Ambushes, to be the Place of their Rendezvous? So that they come like Volunteers to our Nets?—Surely, the Furlow is signed, the Summons issued, and the Point of Reunion settled, by a Providence ever indulgent to Mankind; ever studious to treat Us with Dainties, and load Us with Benefits\*.

We have wondered at † our SAVIOUR's Penetration and Power—his *Penetration*, which, though the Sea was at a Distance, and Walls intervened, discerned the Fish, that had just swallowed a Piece of Money—his *Power*, which, without any Delay, brought the lawless Rambler, charged with the silver Spoil, to *Peter's* Hook. But is it not equally wonderful,

\* Psal. lxxviii. 19.

† See Letter VIII. p. 77.

derful, to observe such innumerable Multitudes of finny Visitants, annually approaching our Shores, and crouding our Banks? Which furnish our Tables with a wholesome and delicate *Repast*; at the same Time, that they yield to our Nation a *Revenue* \*, more certain, and no less considerable, than the Mines of *Peru*.

These approach, while those of *enormous* Size and *tremendous* Appearance abandon the Shores. The latter might indanger the Fisherman's Safety, and would certainly scare away the valuable Fish from our Coasts. They are therefore restrained by an invisible Hand, and abscond in the Abysses of the Ocean. Just as the wild Beasts of the Earth, impelled by the same over-ruling Power, hide themselves in the Recesses of the Forest.—A Ship, infected with a pestilential Distemper, is obliged to keep off at Sea; and not permitted to enter the Port, till she has performed her *Quarantine*. In like manner, these Monsters of the Deep, whose very Business is Destruction, are laid under a *providential* Interdict. Only with this very desirable Difference, that, as their Presence would always be pernicious, they are never suffered to come near; their *Quarantine* is *perpetual*.

*Ask now the Beasts, and they shall teach Thee; and the Fowls of the Air, and they shall tell Thee: or speak*  
to

\* We are told by the afore-mentioned Author, That the Banks of *Newfoundland* alone, bring in to the Proprietors of that Fishery, a Revenue of several Millions every Year.—And they will, in all Probability, be an unimpaired Resource of Treasure, when the richest Mines now wrought in the World, are choked up or exhausted.



to the Earth, and it shall teach Thee \* ; and the Fishes of the Sea shall declare unto Thee—That the LORD is gracious—That his tender Mercies are over all his Works—That to Us He is superabundantly and profusely good. Having ordered all Things in the Surges of the Ocean, as well as on the Surface of the Ground, for our rich Accommodation, and for our greatest Advantage.

One Circumstance, relating to the Natives of the Deep, is very peculiar, and no less astonishing. As they neither sow, nor reap; have neither the Produce of the Hedges, nor the Gleanings of the Field; they are obliged to plunder and devour one another, for necessary Subsistence. They are a kind of authorized Banditti, that make Violence and Murder † their professed Trade.—By this means, prodigious Devastations ensue; and, without proper, without very extraordinary Recruits, the whole Race must continually dwindle, and at length be totally extinct.—Were they to bring forth, like the most prolific of our terrestrial Animals, a Dozen only, or a Score at each Birth; the Increase would be unspeakably too small for the Consumption. The

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I

weaker

\* Job xii. 7, 8. The Earth is represented, as bearing witness to the immense Benignity of the blessed GOD. Some Minutes, or a short Abstract, of her Testimony on this Occasion, may be seen in Letter VI.

† To this, I believe, the Prophet alludes, in that remarkable Expression; *Thou makest Men as the Fishes of the Sea.* Thou sufferest Men to commit, without Restraint or Controul, all Manner of Outrages. What should be a civil Community, is a Scene of Oppression. The Weakest are a Prey to the Strongest, and every One seeks the Destruction of his Neighbour. *Habak. i. 14.*

weaker Species would be destroyed by the stronger; and, in Time, the stronger must perish, even by their successful Endeavours to maintain themselves.—Therefore, to supply Millions of Assassins with their Prey, and Millions of Tables with their Food, yet not to depopulate the watery Realms; the Issue produced by every Breeder is almost incredible. They spawn, not by Scores or Hundreds, but by Thousands and by Millions\*. *A single Mother* is pregnant with a *Nation*. By which amazing, but most needful Expedient, a periodical Reparation is made, proportionable to the immense Havock.

As the Sea is peopled with animated Inhabitants, it is also variegated with *vegetable* Productions. Some, soft as Wool; others, hard as Stone. Some rise, like a leafless Shrub; some are expanded, in the Form of a Net; some grow with their Heads downward, and seem rather hanging on, than springing from, the Juttings of the Rocks. These may, with much greater Propriety, than the famous Plantations of *Semiramis*, be called *pensile* Gardens.—But, as my Walk reached no farther than the Purlieu of the Ocean;

\* Mr. *Petit* found 342,144 Eggs in the hard Roe of a Carp, sixteen Inches long. Mr. *Lewenboeck* counted, in a Cod of an ordinary Size, 9,384,000 Eggs.—A Fecundity perfectly amazing! But admirably adapted to the pressing Exigencies of the watery World; admirably contrived for the Benefit and Delight of Mankind!—If We advert to this Peculiarity, it will give the utmost Emphasis to the Patriarch's *metaphorical* Expression, and an inimitable Beauty to his *prophetic* Wish, *ידו לרבו* Let these my Grandsons grow into a Multitude; or, which is more exactly answerable to the Original, let them multiply abundantly, even like the Fishes of the Ocean, Gen. xlviii. 16.

Ocean; as neither You nor I have ever taken a single Turn among those submarine Groves; as *Moses*, *Joshua*, and *Jonah*, the only Writers that ever made the wonderful Tour, intent upon *more important* Themes, have left Us no Memoirs relating to this curious Point; I shall not venture to advance any thing particular on the Subject. Only one Remark I would offer in general—

The Herbs and Trees, which flourish on the dry Land, are maintained by the Juices, that permeate the Soil, and fluctuate in the Air. For this Purpose, they are furnished with *Leaves*, to collect the one; and with *Roots* to attract the other. Whereas, the Sea-plants, finding sufficient Nourishment in the circumambient Waters, have no Occasion to detach a Party of Roots into the Ground, and forage the Earth for Sustenance. Instead therefore of *penetrating*, they are but just *tacked* to the Bottom; and adhere to some solid Substance, only with such a Degree of Tenacity, as may secure them from being tossed to and fro, by the random Agitation of the Waves.

We see from this, and numberless other Instances, what a *Diversity* there is, in the Operations of the great CREATOR's Hand. Yet every Alteration is an Improvement, and each new Pattern has a *peculiar Fitness* of its own.—The same Oeconomy takes place, such a Difference of Administration I mean, in his Government of the rational World. In "choosing an Heritage for his People," and assigning a Condition to each of his Servants, there is a great Variety with respect to Individuals; yet a perfect Uniformity, and complete Harmony, with respect to



the Whole.—Some He calls out to a Course of distinguished Labours. They make an illustrious Figure in Life, and appear *as a City set on an \* Hill!* Others He consigns over to Obscurity. They are like the Prophets, whom good *Obadiab* hid in a Cave, and are styled *his secret Ones* †. *These*, the Cedars, which stand conspicuous on the Top of *Lebanon*: *these*, the Violets, which lie concealed at the Foot of a Briar.

*St. Paul* was eminently qualified for busy Scenes, and the most extensive Services. He is introduced, therefore, into Places of Concourse.—His Ministry lies amidst the most renowned and populous Cities. Even his *Imprisonment* at *Rome*, seems to have been a providential Expedient for fixing Him, as it were, on the *Stage* of public Observation, and in the very *Center* of universal Intelligence. Where his Preaching was like plunging a Stone into the Midst of a smooth Canal; which affects not only the neighbouring Parts of the Surface, but spreads the floating Circles over all the wide Expanse.—Whereas, the beloved *John*, being less fitted to bustle among a Crowd, is sent into the unfrequented *solitary* Island; there to indulge the Flights of heavenly Contemplation; and receive, with uninterrupted Attention, the mysterious Visions of GOD.—*Job* shall have Thorns in his Path; have the Dunghil for his Seat; and be exposed, as a Mark, to all the Arrows of Tribulation. *Solomon* shall dip his Foot in Oil; shall be elevated on the Throne of Royalty; and surrounded with the most lavish Caresses of Heaven.

In

\* *Math*, v. 14.† *Psal*. lxxxiii. 3.



In all this seeming, this more than seeming Contrariety, there is a Display, not only of sovereign Authority, but of consummate Propriety.—The great HEAD of the Church, acts like a judicious *General*; and appoints such a Station to each of his Soldiers, as corresponds with the Ability He gives. He acts like the most skilful *Physician*; and prescribes such a Remedy for all his Patients, as is most nicely suited to their respective Cases. He knows the precise Point of Time, the particular Place of Abode, the peculiar Circumstances of Condition, which are most proper for each and every of his Children; and, like a tender as well as unerring *Father*; what He knows to be best, that He constantly allots.—I said, like a General, like a Physician, like a Father. But the Comparison is low; the Language is inexpressive; *CHRIST* is all that is implied in these Relations, and unspeakably more—O! that We may rejoice in the Superintendency of such a SAVIOUR; and not only resign Ourselves to his Will, but *thank* Him for managing the Helm; *thank* Him for steering our Course, through the Changes of Time, and the Uncertainties of Futurity. Since, whatever our forward and petulant Passions may suggest, The LORD's Ways are so far from being unequal, that they have all possible Fitness and Propriety; they are ordered “in Number, Weight, and Measure.”

All is so very different from the Prospects, which lately presented themselves, that I can hardly forbear asking, Whether I am not translated into a *new World*?—Where are the waving Hillocks, covered with the CREATOR's Bounty? Where are the fruitful

fruitful Vallies, made vocal with his Praise? No cultured Field, no opening Blossom, not so much as a green Leaf appears. None of my late Entertainments remain, but only the cooling Zephyrs. Which are no longer perfumed with the *Breath* of Flowers, but impregnated with the *Freshness* of the Ocean.— Yet, though all those lovely Landscapes are withdrawn; though the gurgling Fountain is silenced, and the blooming Garden lost: I am not far from the Origin, both of the Odours, which exhale from the one; and of the Crystal, which flows from the other. I am now upon the Margin of that *grand Reservoir*, which supplies the Country with its Fertility, and the Parterre with its Beauty.—The Sea is the inexhaustible Cistern of the Universe. The Air and Sun constitute the mighty *Engine*, which works without Intermiſſion, to raise the liquid Treasure. While the Clouds serve as so many *Aqueducts*, to convey the genial Stores along the Atmosphere; and distribute them at seasonable Periods, and in regular Proportions, through all the Regions of the Globe.

I question, whether the united Application of Mankind could, with their utmost Skill, and with all possible Percolations, fetch a single Drop of perfectly sweet Water\*, from this unmeasurable Pit of Brine.

\* I have not forgotten, what was lately affirmed in our public Papers; That a certain ingenious Gentleman, I think in the City of *Durham*, had found out the Art of *sweetening* Sea-water.—What he produced, might probably approve itself to the Taste, and not be without its Usefulness. Yet I cannot but query, whether it will be found to have all those fine, balmy salutiferous Qualities, which

Brine. Yet the Action of the solar Heat draws off, every Hour, every Minute, Millions and Millions of Tons, in vaporous Exhalations. Which, being skilfully parceled out, and securely lodged in the *Bottles of Heaven* \*, are sent abroad, sweetened and refined, without any brackish Tincture, or the least bituminous Sediment.—Sent abroad upon the Wings of the Wind, to *distill* in Dews, or *pour* themselves in Rain; to *ooze* from the Orifices of Fountains †; to *trickle* along the Veins of Rivulets; to *rise* in the Cavities of Wells; to *roll*, in many a headlong Torrent, from the Sides of Mountains; to *flow*, in copious Streams, amidst the Bosom of burning Deserts, and through the Heart of populous Kingdoms. In order to refresh and fertilize, to beautify and enrich, every Soil, in every Clime.

How amiable is the Goodness, and how amazing is the Power, of the World's Adorable MAKER!—

I 4.

How

which distinguish and recommend the *Rain-Water*. Which has been exhaled by the kindly Warmth of the Sun; has been filtrated by passing and repassing through the Regions of the Air; has been clarified in the highest and purest Tracts of the Atmosphere; has been further refined and perfected by the searching Agency of the Winds.—I should very much wonder, if the *puny* Alembec could equal this *grand* Apparatus of Nature.

\* So the Clouds are *elegantly* styled in sacred Writ, *Job xxxviii. 37.*

† We are obliged to *Clemens Romanus*, for the most just and elegant Representation of Fountains and their Usefulness, that perhaps any where exists. *Ανασι τι πηγας πρὸς ἀπολαυσιν καὶ υἱαν δὴμιερηδεισαι, διχα ἑλλησιως παριχοιλας τις πρὸς ζωναν ἀνθρωποις μαζες,* 1 *Epist. ad Corinth.* He calls *Fountains*, the *Breasts* or *Teats* of the Earth. The Comparison, I believe, is his own: and nothing can exceed it, as to Propriety and Beauty.



How *amiable his Goodness* ! in distributing so largely, what is so absolutely necessary, and so extensively beneficial. That Water, without which We can scarce perform any Business, or enjoy any Comfort, should be every One's Property. Should spring up from the Soil; should drop down from the Clouds; should stream by our Houses; should take a Journey, from the Ends of the Earth, and the Extremities of the Ocean, on Purpose to serve Us.—How *amazing his Power* ! That this boundless Mass of fluid Salt, so intolerably nauseous to the human Taste, should be the original Spring, which deals out every palatable Draught to Mankind, and quenches the Thirst of every Animal ! Doubtless, the Power by which *this* is effected, can extract Comfort from our Afflictions, Advantage from our Calamities, and *make all Things work together for our Good* \*.

Vast and various are the Advantages †, which We receive from the liquid Element: *vast*, as its unbounded Extent; *various*, as its ever-mutable Surface.—The sweet Waters glide along the Earth, in spacious Currents: which not only exhilarate the adjacent Country, by their humid Train, and *exhaling* Moisture; but, by giving a brisk Impulse to the Air, prevent the unwholesome Stagnation of their own Vapours.—They pass by opulent Cities, and receiving  
all

\* Rom. viii. 28.

† The high *Value* which Mankind set upon this Element, and the many *Benefits* they receive from its Ministration, both these Particulars are very strongly expressed by the *Hebrews*. Who call a Pool or Reservoir of Water בִּרְכוֹת; which denotes, in its primary Signification, a *Blessing*, Cant. vii. 4. Isa. vii. 3,



all their Filth, rid them of a thousand Nuisances, Which, when once committed to these *fluid Scavengers* are as effectually secreted, as if they were buried ever so deep in the Earth.—Yet, though they condescend to so mean an Employ, they are fitted for more honourable Services. They enter the Gardens of a Prince, and compose some of the most delightful Ornaments of the Place. They glitter upon the Eye, as they float in the ample *Canal*. They amuse the Imagination, as they ascend in curious *Jet d'Eaus*. They yield a nobler Entertainment, as, forming themselves into Sheets of sloping Silver, they fall in graceful or in grand *Cascades*.—If, instead of Beautifiers, We think proper to make use of them as *Drudges*, they ply at our Mills; they toil incessantly at the Wheel; and, by working the hugest Engines, take upon themselves an unknown Share of our Fatigue, and save Us a proportionable Degree of Expence.

So forcibly they act, when collected; and most surprisingly they insinuate, when *detached*. They throw themselves into the Body of a Plant; they penetrate the minutest of its organized Tubes; and find a Passage through Meanders, *too small* for the Eye to discern, *too numerous* and intricate even for Imagination to follow.—How difficultly does a Labourer that serves the Mason, push his Way up the Rounds of a Ladder, bending under the Burden of Mortar on his Head! While these Servants in the Employ of Nature, carry their Load to a much greater Height; and climb with the utmost Ease, even without the Assistance of Steps or of Stairs. They convey the nutrimental Stores of Vegetation, from  
the

the *lowest Fibres* that are plunged into the Soil, to the very *topmost Twigs* that wave amidst the Clouds. They are the Caterers for the vegetable World : or (if I may be allowed the Expression) the *Sutlers*, which attend the whole *Host* of Plants ; to furnish them with seasonable Refreshment, and necessary Provision. By means of which, *the Trees of the LORD are full of Sap, even the Cedars of Lebanon which HE hath planted* \*. And, notwithstanding their vast Elevation, and prodigious Diffusion ; though they are abandoned by Man, and deprived of all Cultivation ; yet, not a single Branch is destitute of Leaves, nor a single Leaf of Moisture.

Besides the salutary, cleanly, and serviceable Circulation of the Rivers ; the Sea has a Libration, no less advantageous, and much more remarkable.—Every Day, this immense Collection of Waters, for the Space of five or six Hours, *flows* towards the Land ; and, after a short Pause, *retires* again to its inmost Caverns ; taking up nearly the same Time in its Retreat, as is required for its Access.—How *great* is the Power, which sets the whole fluid World in Motion ! Which protrudes to the Shores such an inconceivable Weight of Waters, without any Concurrence from the Winds, frequently in direct Opposition to all their Force ! How *gracious* also is the Providence, which bids the mighty Element perform its tumbling Revolutions, with the most exact Punctuality ! Was it suffered to advance, with a lawless and unlimited Swell ; it might sweep over Kingdoms, and deluge whole Continents. Was it irregular and uncertain in its Approaches, Navigation would

\* Psal civ. 16.

would be at a Stand, and Trade become precarious.—But, being constant at its *stated Periods*, and never exceeding its *appointed Bounds*, it creates no Alarm to the Country, and affords very considerable Aids to Traffic.

The Tide, at its *Flow*, rushing up our large Rivers, clears and deepens the Passage; in many Places spreads a copious Flood, where a dry and empty Waste lay before.—Is the Sailor returned from his Voyage, and waiting at the Mouth of the Channel? The *Flux* is ready to convey his Vessel to the very Doors of the Owner; and without any Hazard of striking on the Rocks, or being fastened in the Sands.—Has the Merchant freighted his Ship? Would He have it transferred to the Ocean? The *Reflux* tenders its Service; and bears away the Load, with the utmost Expedition, and with equal Safety.—Behold, O Man! How greatly thou art beloved, how *highly favoured* by thy MAKER! In what Part of his Works has He forgotten or overlooked thy Welfare? Shew me a Creature, point out a Spot; in the Formation or Disposition of which, He has not been mindful of thy Interests? *He has made Thee to have Dominion over the Works of his Hands, and has put all Things in Subjection under thy Feet. All Sheep and Oxen; the Fowls of the Air, and the Fishes; yea, and the Surges of the Sea\**, are subservient to thy Benefit. Even these, wild and impetuous as they are, yield their willing Backs, to receive thy Load; and like an indefatigable Beast of Burden, carry it to the Place, which thou shalt nominate.

What

\* Psal. viii. 6, 7, 8.

What preserves this vast Flood in a State of perpetual *Purity*? It is the universal Sewers, into which are discharged the Refuse and Filth of the whole World. That which would defile the Land, and pollute the Air, is transmitted to the Ocean, and neither Mischief nor Inconvenience ensue. Those Swarms of *Locusts* — which, while living were a Plague to *Pharaoh*, by their lothed Intrusion; and when dead, might have caused a more dreadful Plague, by their noisome Stench — swept into the Sea, were neither pestilential, nor offensive. How then is this Receptacle of every Nuisance kept clean? Why does it not contract a noxious Taint, and diffuse a destructive Contagion? Such as would render it a *Grave* to the aquatic, and *Bane* to the terrestrial Animals? — 'Tis owing, partly to its incessant Motion, partly to its saline Quality. By the One, it is secured from any *internal* Principle of Corruption; by the other, it works itself clear from every *adventitious* De-filement.

A Directory this, and a Pattern for me! — Thus may divine *Grace*, like the penetrating Power of Salt, cure the Depravity of my Heart, and rectify the Disorders of my Temper! Season my Words, and make all my Conversation savoury! — Thus may a continual Course of *Activity*, in my secular and my sacred Vocation, prevent the pernicious Effects of Indolence! Let me daily exercise, or be attempting to exercise, the Graces of Christianity. Lest Faith become feeble; lest Hope contract Dimness; and Charity wax cold.

Now the Tide begins to flow. Wave rises upon Wave, and Billow rolls over Billow. Nothing can divert,



divert, nothing retard its Progress; no, not for a Moment. Though *Canutus* be in the Way\*; though his royal Authority, and strict Prohibition, nay, though all the Forces of his Kingdom oppose; it will never discontinue the advancing Swell, till it has reached the destined Point.—So, may I *always abound* in Communion with GOD, or in Beneficence to Men; resigning one religious or charitable Employ, only  
to

\* Alluding to a memorable and instructive Story, recorded of King *Canutus*. Who, probably without having read, had nevertheless thoroughly learned, that excellent Lesson of *Horace*;

*Regum timendorum in proprios Greces,*

*Reges in ipsos Imperium est Jovis.*

Some of his abject and designing Flatterers, had the *impious Assurance* to tell Him, “His Power was more than human.”—To convince them of their Folly, and rebuke them for their Falshood, He ordered his Chair of State to be placed on the Extremity of the Shore, just as the Tide began to flow. Here He took his Seat, in the Presence of the *Parasites*, and many other Attendants. Then, with all that Dignity of Air, and Severity of Accent, which sovereign Authority knows how to assume, He said—“Thou Sea, the Land on which I sit is mine; nor has any One dared to invade my Rights, or disobey my Commands, without suffering the deserved Punishment. I charge Thee, therefore, on Pain of my highest Displeasure, not to enter these Territories, nor touch the Feet of *England’s Monarch*.”

When the rude Waves made bold to enter on the forbidden Ground; nay, when those uncourtly Things presumed to rush upon the royal Seat, and even to dash his Majesty’s Person; He started from his Throne, and bid every Beholder observe the *Impotence* of earthly Kings. Bid them remember, That HE alone is worthy of the Name, whom Winds and Waves and universal Nature obey.

to enter upon another; and be *thus* pressing forward, *still* pressing forward, to the Prize of my high Calling in *CHRIST JESUS*.—Differing from those regular Vicissitudes of the Ocean, only in one Particular; That *my* Endeavours never ebb, *my* Soul never draws back. Since this would be, if *temporary*, to my grievous Loss; if *final*, to my aggravated Perdition.

Consider the Sea in another Capacity, and it *connects* the remotest Realms of the Universe; by facilitating an Intercourse between their respective Inhabitants.—What short-sighted Beings are Mankind! How extremely superficial their Views! How unavoidable therefore their frequent Mistakes! The Antients looked upon this bottomless Deep, as an *unpassable* \* Gulf. If our Forefathers were so egregiously mistaken in this Instance; let not Us too peremptorily pronounce upon any difficult or mysterious Point. Lest succeeding Generations, or a more enlightened State, should cover Us with the double Confusion of *childish* Ignorance, and *foolish* Conceit.

We have clearly demonstrated, and happily experienced, the very Reverse of that grey-headed Surmise to be true. The Ocean, instead of being a Bar of Separation, is the great Bond of Union. For this Purpose, it is never *exhausted*, though it supplies the whole Firmament with Clouds, and the whole Earth with Rains. Nor ever *overflows*, though all

\* ————— *Deus abscondit*

*Prudens Oceanò dissociabili*

*Terras.*

H O R.

the Rivers in the Universe are perpetually augmenting its Stores, and pouring in their tributary Floods. —By means of this Element, We travel farther, than Birds of the strongest Pinion fly; and discover Tracts, which the *Vultur's Eye has never seen* \*. We make a Visit to Nations, that lie drowned in their midnight Slumbers, when every industrious Person on *this* Part of the Globe, is bestirring Himself in all the Hurry of Business. We cultivate an Acquaintance with the Sun-burnt *Negro*, and the shivering *Icelander*. We cross the flaming Line, We penetrate the frozen Pole, and wing our Way even round the World.

This is the great Vehicle of *Commerce*.—Not to mention the floating Castles, which contain whole Armies; which bear the Thunder, the fiery Tempests, and all the dreadful Artillery of War; what a Multitude of Ships, of the largest Dimensions, and most prodigious Burden, are continually passing and repassing this universal Thoroughfare! Ships, that are freighted, not with Sacks, but with Harvests of Corn; that carry not Pipes, but Vintages of Wine; that are laden, not with Bars of Iron, Blocks of Marble, or Wedges of Gold, but with whole Quarries of massy Stone, and whole Mines of ponderous Metal. All which, lodged in these *volatile Store-houses*, and actuated by the Breath of Heaven, are wafted to the very Ends of the Earth: wafted, enormous and unwieldy as they are, more expeditiously than the light *Berlin* bowls along the Road; almost as speedily,

\* Job xxviii. 7.

speedily, as the nimble-footed *Roe* bounds over the Hills\*.

Astonishing-Ordination of eternal Wisdom! Yet most graciously contrived for the Benefit of Mankind! I can hardly satisfy my View, in beholding this rolling Chaos; I can never cease my Admiration, in contemplating its amazing Properties.—That an Element, so *unstable* and *fugitive*, should bear up such an immense Weight, as would bend the firmest Floors, or burst the strongest Beams!—That the *thin* and *yielding* Air should drive on, with so much Facility and Speed, Bodies of such excessive Bulk, as the Strength of a Legion would be unable to move.—That the Air and the Water, acting in Conjunction, should carry to the Distance of many thousand Miles, what the united Force of Men and Machines could scarcely drag a single Yard.—Puny and despicable are *our* Attempts: but great and marvelous are *thy* Works, O LORD GOD Almighty! *If thou wilt work*, says the Prophet, *who or what shall let it †?* Neither the Meanness of the Instrument, nor the Greatness of the Event. A Sling and a Stone shall lay the gigantic Bravo in the Dust ‡. An Ox-Goad shall do more Execution than a Battery of Cannon ||. *Even a Worm shall thresh the Mountains,*  
and

\* A Ship, under a brisk and steady Gale, will sail at the Rate of 216 Miles in 24 Hours: persevering, if the Wind continues favourable, in the same rapid Career, for several Days together. A Course, which, considering both its *Swiftness* and *Duration*, cannot be equaled by the ablest Horse, perhaps not by the nimblest Creature that treads the Ground.

† Isa. xliii. 13.

‡ 1 Sam. xvii. 50.

|| Judg.

iii. 31.



*and beat them small, and make the Hills as Chaff* \*. GOD ALL-SUFFICIENT is his Name, and out of Weakness He maketh his Strength perfect.—O! that We, my dear *Aspasio*—that I especially—may be strong in the LORD, and in the Power of his Might! Then, as the light Air is made to act with a more forcible Impulse, than the most vigorous Engines; as the fluid Water is made to sustain more ponderous Loads, than the most substantial Works of Masonry; so We, who in Ourselves are nothing but *Impotence*, shall be enabled to triumph over the Legions of Hell, and tread down all the Temptations of the World:

How are the Mariners conducted through this *fluid Common*, than which nothing is more wide, and nothing more wild? Here is no Track to be followed; no Posts of Direction to be consulted; nor any Shepherd's Hut, where the wandering Traveler may ask his Way.—Are they guided by a Pillar of Fire in the Night, or a moveable Cloud in the Day? As the Sons of *Jacob* and *Joseph* were escorted through the eastern Desarts. No; but by a mean, contemptible and otherwise worthless *Fossil*.—The Apostle *James* mentions it, as a very observable Fact; that the *Ships*, which are so great, and driven of fierce Winds, yet are turned about with a very small Helm, whithersoever the Governor listeth †. Is it not equally wonderful, that they should be led through such a pathless and unmeasurable Waste, by so small an Expedient, as the Intervention of the *Loadstone* ‡?—Till this surprising

Mineral

\* Isa. xli. 14, 15.

† Jam. i. 5.

‡ I am aware, that other Expedients are used for shaping a proper Course on the Ocean; such as making

Mineral was discovered, and its Properties were improved, Navigation lay in its Cradle. Was, at best, a mere Infant, that crept timorously along the Coasts; was obliged to keep within sight of the Shores; and, if driven out beyond the narrow Sphere of her Landmarks, could neither ascertain her Situation, nor pursue her Voyage. But this Guide—when every Beacon on the Top of the Hills, is vanished from the acuteſt Ken; where nothing but Skies are ſeen above, and Seas alone appear below—*this Guide* points out the proper Paſſage. This communicates an Intelligence, which ſhines clear in the thickeſt Darkneſs, and remains ſteady in the moſt tempeſtuous Agitations. This has 'given, not indeed Birth, but *Maturity* to Navigation; and turned her ſwadling Bands into *Wings*. This has emboldened her to launch into the Heart of the Ocean, and enabled her to range from Pole to Pole.

Thus does GOD, both in the Operations of Nature, and the Adminiſtrations of Providence, accompliſh the moſt *important* Ends by the moſt *inconſiderable* Means.—When the formidable *Sifera* is to be cut off, the Blow ſhall be given, not by ſome puſſant Champion, but by the Hand of a Woman \*. When *Jericho* is to be demoliſhed, thoſe impregnable Fortifications ſhall fall, not beneath the Stroke of battering Engines, but before the Sound of Rams  
Horns.

Observations from the Sun by mathematical Inſtruments. But theſe I believe, are only ſubordinate Aids to the Needle. The *grand* Regulator is the Magnet. I have heard an experienced Sailor declare; He would rather be without his *Quadrant*, than without his *Compaſs*.

\* Judg. iv. 9.

Horns \*.—When a hundred thousand *Midianites* are to be routed, the LORD of Hosts will gain this signal Victory, not by numerous Legions completely armed, but by a Handful of *Israelites*, accoutered only with Trumpets, Lamps, and Pitchers †.—Who would have thought, that from the Root of *Jesse*, a Root out of a dry Ground, should arise that great Tree, which stretches her Boughs unto the Sea, and her Height unto the Heavens, and her Branches unto the Ends of the Earth? That the despised *Galilean* and the Carpenter's Son, should be the SAVIOUR of the World, and the HEIR of all Things? Nay; that a Person humbled like the meanest of Slaves, and executed like the vilest of Malefactors; nailed to a Cross, and laid prostrate among the Dead; that HE should restore Life and Immortality to ruined Sinners; should open the Gates of Grace and Glory on lost Mankind? That a few *illiterate* Creatures taken from the Barge, the Oar, and the Net, should confute Philosophers, and convert Kings; should overthrow the Strong-holds of Idolatry, and plant *Christianity* on its Ruins!—This is a Circumstance, which, though a Stumbling-block to some People, has considerably strengthened my Faith. It is perfectly agreeable to the ALMIGHTY's Manner. It is (if I may so speak) the distinguishing Turn of his Hand, and the peculiar Style of his Works. Whence does He raise the charmingly beauteous Flower? Whence the magnificent Myriads of the Forest-Oaks? Whence the boundless and inestimable Stores of the Harvest? From Principles

K 2

which

\* Josh. vi. 3.

† Judg. vii. 19.



which bear not the least Proportion to their Effects.— Besides; this most emphatically speaks THE GOD. It *shews the Lighting down of his glorious Arm* \*; and absolutely precludes all the Pretensions of human Arrogance, or finite Power. It appropriates the Honour to that Supreme AGENT, before whom the *Easy* and the *Arduous* are both alike. All Men that see it must confess, THIS HATH GOD DONE.

Through this Channel, are imported to our Island the choice Productions, and the peculiar Treasures, of every Nation under Heaven. So that We can breakfast upon a Dissolution of the *American Kernel* †; and see the rich nutrimental Liquor froth in our Cups, without ever tempting the sousing Brine. We can steep the delicately-flavoured *Chinese Leaf*, in the Waters of our own Well; or spend the Afternoon in our own Parlour, and be regaled with an Infusion of the finely-scented *Arabian Berry*. We can season the friendly Bowl with the Juices of the *Orange*, or refresh our clammy Palate with the Pulp of the *Tamarind*; without feeling that fervent Heat, which imparts such a poignant Relish to the former; without suffering those scorching Beams, which gave a fever-cooling Virtue to the latter. We can pile upon our Salvers a Pyramid of *Italian Figs*; fill the Interstices with the Sky-dried Raisins of *Malaga*; and form a Summit for the inviting Structure, with the *Pistacia Nut* of *Aleppo*.—By this means, the Eastern Spices exhale

\* Isa. xxx. 30.

† Called the *Cocoa*, which affords the principal Ingredient of *Chocolate*, and grows on a small Tree in *America*.



exhale their Odours on our Tables; and the Western Canes transfuse their Sweetness into our Viands. We clothe our Bodies with the vegetable Fleeces \* of the South, and line our Apparel with warm furry Spoils from the North. We can wear the Pearl, polished in the Abysses of the *Persian* Gulf; and walk on the Carpets, manufactured in the Dominions of the *Great Mogul*; yet neither expose Ourselves to the Rage of boisterous Seas, nor the more dreaded Treachery of barbarous People.—In short; by this grand and beneficial Expedient of Navigation, every Tide conveys into our Ports the Wealth of the remotest Climes, and brings the Abundance of the Universe to be unladen on our Quays. *London* becomes a Mart of Nations; and almost every private House in the Kingdom, is embellished or accommodated from the four Quarters of the Globe.

*Almost every private House*—Is not this more like rhetorical Flourish, than real Truth? Are not all the Advantages I have mentioned, the peculiar Portion of the Rich? Is not the Sea, like high Life and the gay World, somewhat *capricious* and *partial*? Bestowing lavishly her Favours on the Wealthy, at the same Time that She neglects the Needy?—Quite the Reverse. Like her most exalted yet most condescending CREATOR, She is no Respector of Persons.

\* *Cotton*, which is a Sort of Wool, encompassing the Seed of a Tree.—Its Fruit is of an oval Form, about the Size of a Nut. As it ripens, it grows black on the Outside; and, by the Heat of the Sun, opens in several Places, discovering the Cotton through the Clefts, which is of an admirable Whiteness. See CHAMB. Dict.

sons. She deals out her Liberalities to All; to the Wealthy, such as are suitable to their Circumstances; to the Indigent, such as are best adapted to their Condition. If She ornaments the Abodes of the first, She employs the Hands of the last; furnishes *these* with useful Labour, *those* with elegant Accommodations. What a Multitude of industrious People acquire a Livelihood, by preparing the Commodities intended for Exportation! And what a Multitude of dextrous Artificers maintain their Families, by manufacturing the Wares imported from abroad!

It is reckoned a valuable Species of Beneficence, to provide proper Work for the Poor. This withdraws them from many Temptations, and preserves them from much Wickedness. It hinders them from being a Burden to themselves, and a Nuisance to the Public. They might otherwise be *idle*, and as Vermin on the Body politic: or even *mutinous*, and as Vipers in the Bowels of the Nation. Whereas, by exerting themselves in a due Subordination, and with becoming Diligence, they are the very Sinews of the Community; or like the grand Wheel in the Machine of State, whose incessant Activity distributes Plenty, and pours innumerable Conveniencies through the whole.—What a *Master* then, or rather what a *Mistress*, is the Sea! How extensive her Correspondence, and how large her Demand for Workmen! Into what Branch of Trade does she not enter? What kind of ingenious Science, or useful Toil, does she not befriend? How many Millions of honest but needy Persons are engaged in her Service? And how amply are they repaid for their Pains!—*They that go down to the Sea in Ships, and occupy their Business in*  
great

*great Waters, these Men see the Works of the LORD, and his Wonders in the Deep. They also that dwell among their own People, and abide in the Villages, even they enjoy the Bounty, and share the Advantages of the Ocean. For, though it is false Philosophy, to suppose the Waters themselves strained through subterranean Passages, into the inland Countries; yet it is an undeniable Truth, that their beneficial Effects are transfused into every Town, every Hamlet, and every Cottage.*

Surely, the Inhabitants of our Isle, have Reason to turn the Prediction of *Moses*, concerning the Tribe of *Joseph*, into a devout and grateful Acknowledgment.—*Blessed of the LORD is \* our Land. Blessed with the precious Things of Heaven, with the Dew, and with the Deep that coucheth beneath. With the precious Things brought forth by the Sun, and with the precious Things thrust forth by the Moon. With the chief Things of the antient Mountains, and with the precious Things of the everlasting Hills: and with the precious Things of the Earth, and the Fulness thereof †.*  
—May

\* *Is*, (so I would translate the Original) not *be*; in the *predictive*, not *precatory* Form. This implies a Fulness of Faith, and distinguishes Prophecy from Prayer; best suits the extraordinary Illumination of *Moses*; and does most Honour to the omniscient SPIRIT.

† *Deut. xxxiii. 13, 14, 15, 16.* Here seems to be an exact Summary, and a poetical Description of the Riches of Nature.—*The precious Things of Heaven*; or Rain, which descends from the upper; and *Dew*, which is formed in the lower, Regions of the Firmament.—*The Deep that coucheth beneath*; Seas, Rivers, Fountains, Wells, which lie in the Bosom of the Soil; and are Sources of Fertility and Plenty.—*The precious Things brought forth by*



—May we also enjoy *the Good-will of HIM, who dwelt in the Bush \**, and the Grace of HIM, who hung on the Tree! May the eternal GOD be our Refuge, and his everlasting Arms underneath both Us and our Interests!—Happy then wilt Thou be, thrice happy, O *England!* Thy temporal Advantages, and thy spiritual Privileges considered, it may truly be said, *Who, or what Nation, is like unto Thee?*

This for my Country; now let me wish for myself;

*GOD of all Worlds! Source and Supreme of Things!  
From whom all Life, from whom Duration springs!  
Intense O! let me for thy Glory burn,  
Nor fruitless view my Days and Months return.*

*Give*

*the Sun*, must certainly denote the Herbs, Plants, Trees, and all Manner of *Vegetables*, with their respective Fruits.—*The precious Things thrust forth by the Moon*, may probably refer to the *mineral Kingdoms*; in the Formation of which, that Ruler of the Night may have a considerable Influence. The Moon is confessedly the Parent of Tides; and may put in motion those bituminous and saline Fluids, which, circulating through the Pores of the Earth, and fixing in Beds of homogeneous Matter, are supposed to commence Minerals.—As our sacred Philosopher has already specified the vegetable Tribes, and (if I mistake not) the Beds of Fossils, *the principal Things of the Mountains and Hills*, should signify the Sheep, Goats, and other valuable Animals, which feed upon those vast Declivities. Then, *the precious Things of the Earth*, may express those Herds of larger Cattle, which have their Pasturage in the Plains, Valleys, and lower Grounds. A Sense, which recommends itself from this Consideration, That the Wealth of the Antients consisted chiefly in Cattle.—*The Fulness thereof*, may be a Kind of Recapitulation: a comprehensive Term, including the whole Produce of the terraqueous Globe; *the magnificent Liberality of JEHOVAH to his People*,

\* Deut. xxxiii. 16.



*Give me with Wonder at thy Works to glow,  
To grasp thy Vision, and thy Truths to know:  
O'er Time's tempestuous Sea to reach thy Shore,  
And live, and sing, where Time shall be no more.*

You see, *Aspasio*, I have been studying the Volume of Nature; endeavouring to read its capital Characters, and learn some of its instructive Lessons. The Sea has been the Page; but how *superficial* is my Perusal, and no less *scanty* my Knowledge. Little, very little have I seen or conceived, relating to those Works of Wonder, which the vast unfathomable Deep contains\*—the Plants it produces, and the Creatures it nourishes—its stupendous Rocks, and subterranean Caves—the Heaps of Pearl, which are its native Growth; and the Loads of Gold, which it has gained by Shipwreck.—So superficial are my Views of *CHRIST*; so scanty is my Acquaintance with the Gospel.

You, I presume, are sitting at the Feet of that Sublime TEACHER; and attending to the Dictates of *HIS* Mouth, in whom are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge†. Let me promise myself

\* Should the Reader desire to see this Subject, more largely opened, and more fully improved, I would refer Him to *Contemplations on the Ocean*, lately published by my ingenious and pious Friend Mr. *Pearfall*. In which, a refined Fancy and a delicate Philosophy, compose a Chaplet for evangelical Divinity. Uniting some of their beautiful and fragrant Flowers, to adorn the Gospel of GOD our SAVIOUR—to quicken and refresh the Spirits of his People—to invite and win the Hearts of the Disobedient.

† Col. ii. 3.

myself a Communication of *your* Thoughts, as I have freely transmitted a Specimen of *mine*. And I will make no scruple to acknowledge the Superiority of the Exchange; that I receive

Χρυσέα χαλχείων, ἐκατόμβοι' ἐννεάβοιον.

Or, as the eloquent *Isaiab* speaks; *For Brass you will bring Gold, and for Iron you will bring Silver\**: rendering me, by this Intercourse, your more obliged, though it is scarce possible for me to be, more than I already am,

*Your affectionate*

THERON.

P. S. Monsieur *Paschal*, who was remarkably fond of *Brevity*, makes an odd Excuse for transgressing, on a particular Occasion, his favourite Rule. He intreats his Friend to pardon the unusual Length of his Epistle, by assuring Him, *That he had not Time to make it shorter*.—I cannot, it must be confessed, adopt this Philosopher's Apology. For, I have purposely lengthened my Letter, with a View of setting, in this *one* Circumstance, a Pattern for my *Aspasio*.

\* Isa. lx. 17.



# LETTER X.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

I Thank you for your *Letter*, because it entertains and improves me: I thank you for your *Postscript*, because it is my Encouragement and my Apology.— I am set down to write, with a copious Stock of Materials. It will be far more difficult to contract, than to enlarge. I must therefore acknowledge myself obliged to your Candour, for assigning me the *easier* Task.—That Prolixity, which, in others, might be ungenteel and faulty; is, in me, an Act of Complaisance, and Matter of Duty.

Though absent from You, I went with You in your late Ramble. Your descriptive Pen has made me Partaker of the *ideal Delight*: may divine Grace enable me to share in the *spiritual Improvement*!— When you displayed the Beauties of the Morn, breaking forth from the Obscurity of Night; when you adopted that noble Aspiration from our philosophic Poet; I could not forbear adding—“ Thus may the  
“ gracious GOD, who commands the Light to  
“ shine out of the Midnight Darkness, shine into  
“ our Hearts; and give that *incomparably glorious*  
“ Knowledge, the Knowledge of his blessed SELF!  
“ Which, though discernable through all the Tracts  
“ of

“ of Creation, and derivable from every Work of  
 “ his Almighty Hand ; yet no where beams forth  
 “ with such *complete* and such *amiable* Lustre, as in the  
 “ Person of *JESUS CHRIST* \*.” — Here we  
 behold all the sublime Perfections of the DEITY,  
 not only manifested with inimitable Splendor, but  
 operating for our own Advantage. We behold them,  
 as *Job* speaks, *for Ourselves* † ; and cannot but re-  
 ceive inexpressible Refreshment and Joy from the  
 View.

When you walked beneath the Shade of those  
 huge, horrid, and enormous Cliffs ; both amused  
 and alarmed at their stupendous Magnitude, and  
 frightful Irregularity—When you cast your Eye upon  
 the wide-expanded Surface of the Ocean—When  
 you surveyed the far more unmeasurable Arches of  
 the Sky—And meditated, in that awful Solitude, on  
 the wildest and most magnificent Appearances of  
 Nature—I felt the same Kind of devout Astonishment  
 with yourself. While the Soul was wrapt in *pensive*  
*Stillness*, and *pleasing Dread* ‡, methought, I heard a  
 Voice, or something like a Voice, from the silent  
 Spheres, as well as from the sounding Seas. It  
 seemed to echo back, what the mighty Angel, whom  
*John* saw flying in the midst of Heaven, once pro-  
 claimed ; “ *Worship HIM, who made Heaven and*  
*Earth,*

\* 2 Cor. iv. 6. † Job xix. 27.

‡ It seems to have been such a Kind, not of *anxious*  
 but of *pleasing Dread*, which seized the Disciples on the  
 Mount of Transfiguration : *now yap εφοβου*, for they were  
 struck with a profound, but delightful Awe. *Delightful*,  
 otherwise it is not easy to conceive, why *Peter* should pro-  
 pose to *build Tabernacles* there, or how He could wish to  
 continue in those Circumstances, *Mark* ix. 6.



“*Earth, and the Sea, and the Fountains of Water* \*.  
 “Worship Him, who stretched out that azure Pa-  
 “vilion with such amazing Grandeur : who measur-  
 “ed yonder World of Waters, in the Hollow of his  
 “Hand : and before whom, this immense Range of  
 “mountainous Cliffs, is but as Dust upon the  
 “Scale.”

When you described the *dismal Situation* of a Wretch, exposed on the Edges of the tremendous Precipice ; hanging over the ragged Rocks, and the unfathomable Gulf ; and cleaving only to a slender, treacherous, breaking Bough : how heartily did I join in your adoring Acknowledgments to that kind, interposing, blessed Hand, which rescued us both from an infinitely more threatening and dreadful Danger ! Rescued us, as *Slaves*, from the Dominion of the Devil : snatched us, as *Brands*, from the in-extinguishable Burnings. And bid Us (O marvelous, superabundant Goodness !) bid Us possess the *Liberty* of Righteousness ; bid us inherit the *Kingdom* of Heaven.

When You mention the past Indolence, and the present Fervour of your Prayers, I could not forbear reiterating my Praises to GOD on your Behalf. This is a Proof, my dear *Theron*, that you are going in the Way everlasting ; for it is written, *They shall come with Weeping, and with Supplications will I lead them* †. This is the Work of the HOLY GHOST, dwelling in your Heart ; for what saith the Scripture ? *I will pour upon them the Spirit of Grace and of Supplication* ‡. And our LORD Himself mentions this,

\* Rev. xiv. 7. † Jer. xxxi. 9. ‡ Zech. xii. 10.

this, as the Indication of a true Conversion; *Behold! he prayeth*\*.—Had not *Saul* prayed before? Yes; and made long Prayers too. But he never, till that Instant, was sensible of his undone and damnable Condition. Never cried to GOD from the Depths of his Distress, or from the Depths of his Heart. Nor ever solicited the Throne of Grace, in the all-prevailing Name of *JESUS CHRIST*.—His Prayers, till then, were somewhat like the *Motes*, which fluctuate to and fro in the Air, without any vigorous Impulse, or any certain Aim. But, in that Hour they were like the *Arrow*, which springs from the strained Bow; and, quick as Lightning, flies to the Mark.

I was pleased to find You, in the Process of your Letter, insensibly forgetting the Narrative; and so engaged by the Subject, that you spoke not as the *Relater*, but as the *Beholder*.—Thus may We always be affected, when We study the Oracles of Truth. Study them, not as cold unconcerned Critics, who are only to judge of their Meaning; but as Persons *deeply interested* in all they contain. Who are particularly addressed in every Exhortation, and directed by every Precept. Whose are the Promises, and to whom belong the precious Privileges.—When We are enabled thus to *realize* and *appropriate* the Contents of that invaluable Book; then we shall taste the Sweetness, and feel the Power of the Scriptures. Then We shall know, by happy Experience, that our Divine MASTER's Words, are not barely Sounds and Syllables, but *they are Spirit, and they are Life*†.

I was

\* Acts ix. 11.

† John vi. 63.

I was still more agreeably entertained with your Picture of *Commerce*, and of the Advantages We receive from *Navigation*. One Advantage, however, I can specify, which is greater than any, greater than all, You have celebrated. An Advantage, which will endear and ennoble Navigation, so long as the Sun and Moon endure. The Gospel, my dear Friend, the *glorious Gospel* came to our Island through this Channel. The Volume that comprizes it, and the Preacher that published it, both were imported by Shipping. And may We not say, with the inraptured *Isaiah*? *How beautiful are the Feet of them, that bring good Tidings; that publish Peace; that bring good Tidings of Good; that publish Salvation; that say unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth \**. It is pleasant to hear their Voice; pleasant to contemplate their

\* *Isa. lii. 7.* Never did Language bespeak an *inraptured* Soul, more significantly than this sacred Exclamation. The Prophet is all Wonder and all Joy. He is so enamoured with his Subject, and so captivated with the Glory of the Gospel, that He can never say enough of its Excellencies.—*Good Tidings*; the very best, that Earth could receive, or Heaven proclaim. *Good Tidings of Good*; a most comprehensive Good; a Collection of every Blessing; or all good Things in one. *Publish Peace*; Peace with GOD, the everlasting King; and that sweet Peace of Conscience, which the whole World cannot give. *Publish Salvation*; or that Gift of Righteousness which is the meritorious Cause, together with that Spirit of Liberty and Spirit of Adoption, which are the rich and grand Constituents of Salvation. *That say unto Zion, Thy GOD reigneth*; not Sin and Satan, not Lust and Appetite, oppressive Tyrants and worse than *Egyptian Task-Masters*, but the All-wise and infinitely Gracious JEHOVAH; He, even He setteth up his pure, his peaceful, his spiritual Kingdom, in the Believer's Heart, in the *Gentile Nations*, and in all Lands.



their Message; and pleasant even to behold, the Ground on which they trod, or the very Waves over which they sailed.—This made the holy Prophet rejoice in Spirit, when he foresaw the extensive Spread of his MASTER's Glory, and the certain Commencement of *our* Happiness. This put into his Mouth that affectionate and congratulatory Address; which, in a very particular Manner, is directed to Us and our Countrymen: *Sing unto the LORD a new Song, and his Praise from the Ends of the Earth: ye that go down to the Sea, and all that is therein; ye Isles, and the Inhabitants thereof. Let the Wilderness and the Cities thereof lift up their Voice; let the Inhabitants of the Rock sing, let them shout from the Top of the Mountains. Let them give Glory unto the LORD; and declare his Praise in the Islands\*.*

We read, in *Ezekiel*, of the *most magnificent* Fleet, that ever ploughed the Seas. The Masts were of Cedar †, and the Benches of Ivory. Fine Linen, beautified with Embroidery, floted to the Winds, and formed the Sails. Blue and Purple rigged the Vessel, and clothed the meanest Mariner.—Let Us suppose, that the Freight of this splendid Navy, was proportioned, in Value, to its sumptuous Tackling. Yet how poor, how despicable were either, were both, if estimated with the Treasures of the Gospel: those *divine Treasures*, which spring from the Imputation of our REDEEMER's Righteousness! And which have much the same kindly Influence on *religious Practice*, as Navigation, with all her Improvements, has upon Traffic.—Give me leave to confirm this

\* *Isa.* xlii. 10, 11, 12.† *Ezek.* xxvii. 5, &c.



this Assertion, by selecting a few Instances, and applying them in a few Interrogatories.

One of the Benefits, proceeding from the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness, is *Pardon*. Pardon, not partial, but complete. A Pardon of each Sin, be it ever so *heinous*; a Pardon of all Sins, be they ever so *numerous*. For thus saith *GOD* the *LORD*, who sent both his Prophets and Apostles, preaching Peace by *JESUS CHRIST*. *I will pardon ALL their Iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.\**—To learn the desirable Nature of this Blessing, let Us step back into the Annals of History, and attend a traitorous unhappy Nobleman to his *vindictive* Exit. His Body is demanded by the Ministers of Justice. Reluctant and trembling, He is conducted to the Scaffold. There, the alarmed Criminal sees the mourning Block. Sees the glittering Ax. Sees the Coffin prepared for his Corpse. Sees thousands of anxious Spectators; waiting, with eager Looks and throbbing Hearts, the fearful Catastrophe. In a Word; he sees Death advancing, with all the Solemnities of *Horror* and *Woe*.—Time elapses. The preparatory Ceremonies are dispatched. The fatal Moment is arrived. No longer Respite can be allowed. He must submit to immediate Execution. Accordingly he prostrates himself to receive the Stroke. But—seized with new Terrors, at the poised Ax, and approaching Blow, He starts from the dangerous Posture.—Again he bends, and again snatches his Neck from

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\* Jer. xxxiii. 8.

the impending Edge.—A third Time, He lifts his pale Countenance, to the pitying Crowds, and departing Light.—Once more He bows to the Block, and once more raises his Head, in *wishful Expectation* of the Royal Clemency.—Had a Messenger appeared, at the critical Instant, with a shout of Joy upon his Tongue, and a sealed Pardon in his Hand; O! how transporting the News! *Inexpressibly welcome* the Favour!—What was denied to his passionate Desires; denied to the importunate Solicitations of his Friends; is freely offered to Us in the Gospel of *CHRIST*: a Pardon of infinitely higher Consequence; which obliterates Millions and Millions of rebellious Acts: which extends its blessed Effects, not merely through the little Span of Life, but beyond the Gates of the Grave—beyond the Boundaries of Time—through all the Ages of Eternity.

How unfathomable is that immense Flood, on which my *Theron* lately exercised his Contemplation! The toiling Plummets, with all their Length of Cordage, are unable to find a Bottom. Were the hugest Millstones, or the highest Towers, or the most spacious Cities, cast into that prodigious Gulf, they would be totally overwhelmed, and irrecoverably lost. Therefore the inspired Prophet, to shew the *boundless* Extent of the divine Mercies in *JESUS CHRIST*, and to denote the *Fullness* of their Pardon who are cleansed in the REDEEMER's Blood, hath illustrated both by this grand Similitude. *Thou wilt cast all their Sins into the Depths of the Sea* \*—not one, or a few, but *all* their Sins—not barely behind thy Back, but into the Sea—and not into the shallow

\* Mic. vii. 19.

shallow Parts, but in the very *Depths* of the Ocean—so that they shall never rise up in Judgment; never be taken notice of; no, nor ever be remembered any more.

With an Act of total Indemnity, let Us join a thorough *Restoration to Favour*.—If the Wrath of an earthly King be as *the Roaring of a Lion* \*; how much more tremendous is *His* Indignation, who is able to cast both Body and Soul into Hell! If the Favour of an earthly Sovereign be as *Dew upon the Grass*; how much more desirable and delightful HIS Loving-kindness, whom all Things in Heaven and Earth obey!—By the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*, we are freed from all foreboding Apprehensions of the former, and established in the comfortable Possession of the latter. The Gospel renews and ratifies that joyful Proclamation of the angelic Host, *Peace on Earth, and Good-will to Men* †. GOD is not only pacified toward Believers, but well pleased with them in his dear SON. They are the Objects of his complacential Delight, and He rejoices over them to do them Good.

Nay, they are made Children, *Sons and Daughters of the LORD Almighty* ‡. And if Sons, then Heirs of GOD, and joint Heirs with *CHRIST* §.—The chief Captain mentioned in the *Acts*, purchased his Freedom of the Imperial City *Rome*, with a great Sum of Money §. If such a little transient Immunity, was so valuable in his Esteem; who can express the Worth, who can conceive the Dignity, of this divine Adoption? Yet it belongs to those, who

L 2

receive

\* Prov. xix. 12. † Luke ii. 14. ‡ 2 Cor. vi. 18.  
 § Rom. viii. 17. § Acts xxii. 28.



receive the Gospel, and are interested in *CHRIST*.  
 —They have Access to the Omnipotent BEING; such free and welcome Access, as a beloved Child to an indulgent Father. To Him they may fly for Aid, in every Difficulty; and from Him obtain a Supply, in all their Wants.—GOD, as the sacred Charter runs, IS THEIR GOD. All his lovely, all his adorable Perfections, are their glorious Inheritance, and exceeding great Reward. That eternal Power, to which nothing is impossible, exerts itself as their *Guard*; and that unerring Wisdom, from which nothing is concealed, acts as their *Guide*. His very Justice is no longer an incensed Adversary, demanding Vengeance or meditating Destruction; but a faithful *Guarantee*, to provide for the punctual Execution of the REDEEMER's Treaty, and their complete Enjoyment of its various Blessings.—What a Privilege is this! Rather what a *Cluster* of Privileges is Here! Weigh the Kingdoms of the World; cast all the Glories of them into the Scale; and they will be found, when compared with these divine Prerogatives, *emptier* than the Bubble that bursts, *lighter* than the Spark that expires.

In the Gospel are given exceeding great and precious Promises. Of such *Value*, that they were procured by the Blood of *CHRIST*; of such *Certainty*, that they are ratified by the Oath \* of JEHOVAH. So *durable*, that, though all Flesh is Grass, and all the Goodliness thereof as the Flower of the Grass, this Word of our GOD abideth for ever †; so *efficacious*, that there are no such Cordials to revive our fainting,

\* Heb. vi. 17.

† 1 Pet. i. 23.



fainting, and no such Bulwarks to secure our indangered Souls. With these the Bible is as richly replenished, as the clear midnight Sky is bespangled with Stars. They are all *Yea and Amen*, consigned over as a sure unalienable Portion, to them that are in *JESUS CHRIST*\*.

Another Benefit, given in Consequence of the REDEEMER's Righteousness, is the *sanctifying SPIRIT*. A most comprehensive Blessing this! Our SAVIOUR intimates, that it includes every heavenly Gift, is an Assemblage of all good Things †. —How singular a Comfort must it be to blind *Bartimeus*, to have his Eyes opened, and behold the all-cheering Light of the Sun ‡! So, and far more comfortable, are the inlightening Influences of the blessed SPIRIT; when they shine upon the wretched Creature, who sits in Darkness and the Shadow of Death.—How peculiar a Mercy for the impure and abhorred *Leper*, to be healed of his inveterate Disease! To feel the soothing Sensations of Ease, where Sores rankled and Pain raged! Instead of infeebling Languors and lothesome Deformity, Vigour braces his Limbs, and Comeliness blooms in his Countenance ||. Equally benign and equally salubrious, is the Agency of the Divine SPIRIT, on our depraved, polluted, sensual Minds.—How signal was the Recovery, and how welcome the Change! When that unhappy Creature, so wildly agitated by a *mischievous Dæmon*, was reinstated in the peaceful Possession of Himself and his Faculties!

L 3 When,

\* 2 Cor. i. 20.  
Luke xi. 13.

† Compare *Matt. vii. 11.* with  
‡ *Mark x. 52.* || *Matt. viii. 3.*

When, instead of unnaturally cutting his own Flesh, or committing barbarous Outrages on innocent Travelers, He sat composed and attentive at the Feet of *JESUS*! Receiving heavenly Instruction from his Lips, and learning the Meekness of Wisdom from his Example. So salutary and beneficial is the transforming Power of the *HOLY GHOST* the Comforter; softening the rugged, sweetening the morose, and calming the passionate Temper.—It is undoubtedly the utmost Improvement and the highest Happiness of our Nature, to have the Image of the blessed *GOD* reinstamped on our Hearts. This is an Earnest, and an Anticipation also, of endless Felicity. A *Bud* which will open in Heaven, and spread into immortal Glory. A *Dawn*, which will shine more and more, till the Sun of Righteousness arises, and brightens it into everlasting Day. This Bud the sanctifying *SPIRIT* ingrafts, this Dawn the Grace of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* diffuses, in the barren and benighted Soul.

In a Word; receive this Righteousness, and You have a Title to all Blessings, whether they be present or future, bodily or spiritual, temporal or eternal. From the necessary Conveniencies of Bread to eat, and Raiment to put on; even to the Crowns of Glory, and the Fulness of Joy; *all, all*, are owing to our *REDEEMER*'s Righteousness.—You see now, *Theron*, That our Scheme, has no Tendency to impoverish your spiritual Condition, or diminish your true Riches: any more than those Tracts of Water, which surround our Island, are detrimental

to

to the Wealth of its Inhabitants. Detrimental! No; they are an inexhaustible Source of Treasure. They convey to our Use the choicest Accommodations, and the most elegant Delights. Such as would in vain be expected, if the whole Ocean was converted into the finest Meads, and most fertile Pastures, So—but to apply this Comparison, would forestal your principal Question.

“ Do not these Favours, though unspeakably precious in themselves, tend to the Introduction or Support of Ungodliness?” — Quite the Reverse. Have We *Redemption* through our SAVIOUR's Blood, even the Forgiveness of our Sins? We are redeemed, not that We may sink in Supineness, or launch into Licentiousness, but that We may be a peculiar People, zealous of good Works\*.—Are We made the *Children* of GOD? Then let our Light so shine before Men, that others, seeing our good Works, may glorify our FATHER which is in Heaven †. This is the genuine Consequence of such a Doctrine, and the proper Effect of such a Benefit.—Are We vested with sacred *Privileges*? These admonish Us, these urge Us, to walk worthy of HIM, who hath called us to his Kingdom and Glory ‡. Shall the Citizens of Heaven be animated with no higher Views, than the Slaves of Appetite, and Drudges of the World?—Are We constituted *Heirs* of the *Promises*? The Grace which they ascertain, is intended to make Us Partakers of a Divine Nature ||; and the Encouragement which they administer, incites

L 4

Us

\* Tit. ii. 14.  
|| 2 Pet. i. 4.

† Matt. v. 16.

‡ 1 Thess. ii. 12.

Us to cleanse Ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, incites Us to perfect Holiness in the Fear of GOD\*.—Such high Immunities are a most endearing Persuasive, not to disgrace, but magnify, not to provoke, but please, their unspeakably beneficent AUTHOR.

I might farther observe, that Holiness is one of the most distinguished Blessings in our System. Nay, is the very *central* Blessing, to which all the others verge; in which they all terminate.—Were We *chosen* from Eternity? It was for this Purpose, that We may be holy and unblameable in Love†.—Are We *called* in Time? It is to this Intent, that We may shew forth the Praises of Him, who hath called Us out of Darkness into his marvelous Light‡.—Are We *created again in CHRIST JESUS*? It is, to capacitate Us for acceptable Service, and to furnish Us unto every good Work§. *I will put my Spirit within You, saith the LORD.* For what End? *That Ye may walk in my Statutes, and keep my Judgments, and do them*§. Here comes in my Theron's favourite Endowment, sincere Obedience. Far, very far from discarding sincere Obedience, We would only introduce it, under its due Character, and in its proper Order. *Under its due Character*; as the Fruit, not the Cause, of our Interest in *CHRIST*'s Righteousness. *In its due Order*; as following, not preceding, the Gift of Justification.

These Privileges, my dear Friend, are salutary, as the Pool of *Bethesda*¶. They are restorative, as the

\* 2 Cor. vii. 1.

† Eph. i. 4.

‡ 1 Pet. ii. 9.

§ Eph. ii. 10.

§ Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

¶ John v. 4.



the Waters of *Siloam* \*. Or like that sacred Stream flowing from the *Sanctuary*; which healed the Rivers, healed the Sea, and made even the Desert flourish †. —If Justification by the Righteousness of *CHRIST* had a Tendency, to subvert the Foundation of Holiness; to confirm the hypocritical Professor, in his Neglect of moral Duties; or discourage the sincere Convert, from the Pursuit of real Virtue; it would, doubtless, be unworthy of any Acceptation, or rather worthy of universal Abhorrence. But I dare appeal, not only to the Nature of the Doctrine, and the Reason of Things, but to the Experience of All —Yes, of all who *have tasted, that the LORD is gracious* †. “Speak, Ye who are enabled to believe, “that GOD is reconciled; has received the all-“satisfying Atonement; and placed his SON’s “Righteousness to your Account! That He regards “You as his Children, and will receive You to his “Glory!—Have You not, under *such* Convictions, “felt your Hearts exulting with conscious Joy; and “every Power of your Souls springing forward, to “glorify your heavenly FATHER—glorify Him “by every Instance of Obedience, Fidelity, and “Zeal?”

Can such invaluable Benefits have a prejudicial Influence on our Practice, if, to the Consideration of their superlative Worth, We add that *unequaled Price*, by which they were purchased?—HE who is high above all Height, humbled Himself to be made of a Woman, and born in a Stable; that We might be admitted into the Family of GOD, and exalted to  
the

\* John ix. 7. † Ezek. xlvii. 8, 9. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 3.

the Mansions of Heaven. And will this great Humiliation, which is the Basis of our Happiness, prompt Us to look down with *Contempt* on Others, or entertain *arrogant* Thoughts of Ourselves?

THE ONLY BEGOTTEN and the supreme Delight of the FATHER, was numbered with Transgressors, and ranked with Felons; that We might be joined to the innumerable Company of Angels, and associated with Saints in Glory everlasting. And will any One make this a Precedent or a Plea, for *walking in the Counsel of the Ungodly*; for *standing in the Way of Sinners*; or *sitting in the Seat of the Scornful* \*?

All manner of Evil was spoken of the faultless JESUS; his blessed Name was vilified by blaspheming Tongues, and his unblameable Conduct blackened with the foulest Aspersions; on purpose that We may be applauded, when We are judged; and each hear those transporting Words, WELL DONE THOU GOOD AND FAITHFUL SERVANT †! Will this embolden Us to *dishonour* our LORD, and *stain* our holy Profession? Shall We from hence be induced to open the Mouths of his Enemies, and furnish them with Occasion to speak reproachfully?

HE went, galled with the Lashes of the Scourge, and penetrated with the pungent Thorns; He went, loaded with the execrable Cross, and marking the Way with his precious Blood; *thus* He went to his ignominious and tormenting Exit: that We may enter into *Sion* with Songs of Triumph on our Lips, and with everlasting Joy on our Heads. Does this  
invite

\* Psal. i. 1.

† Matt. xxv. 21.

invite Us to go, crowned with Rose-buds, to the House of *Riot*; or go, muffled in Disguise, to the *Midnight-Revel*? Will it not rather incline Us, to sit down at his pierced Feet, and bathe them with our Tears, and take Delight \* in mourning for our crucified LORD?

Behold! He hangs on the cursed Tree. There, there He hangs; rent with Wounds, and racked with Pain. He pours his Groans, and spills his Blood. He bows his Head, his patient princely Head, and dies—astonishing, ravishing Consideration! He dies for *You* and *me*. And will this harden our Hearts, or arm our Hands, to crucify Him afresh by any allowed Iniquity? Does not Reason suggest, and Christianity dictate, and all that is ingenuous in force, the Apostle's important Inference? *If One died for All, then they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them* †.

He thought upon Us, long before the Foundations of the World were laid; He remembers Us, now he is exalted to the Right-hand of the MAJESTY in the Heavens; and will never, never forget Us, through all the Revolutions of Eternity. And is this a Motive to forget his Name; to disregard his Word;  
or

\* The Sorrow, arising from such tender and grateful View of the crucified JESUS, is that evangelical godly Sorrow, which *worketh Repentance unto Salvation not to be repented of*, 2 Cor. vii. 10. And is there not Reason—when We consider the Pains He felt, the Curse He bore, and the Blood He shed—is there not abundant Reason to say, with *Homer's* afflicted Hero?

Τὴν πρῶτον ἡμέραν.

Iliad. γ.

† 2 Cor. v. 15, 16.

or to imitate the shameful Neutrality and Indifference of *Gallio*? Impressed with a Sense of this invariable and everlasting Kindness, surely, We shall declare Ourselves, as those Captives in *Babylon*, concerning their dear native City *Jerusalem*: *If I forget Thee, O blessed JESUS, let my Right-hand forget her Cunning; if I do not remember Thee, let my Tongue cleave to the Roof of my Mouth* \*.

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*Remember Thee!*

*Ay, my dear LORD, while Memory holds a Seat  
In this devoted Breast—Remember Thee!*

*Yes, from the Table of my Memory*

*I'll wipe away all trivial fond Records,*

*Which Youth and Observation copied there,*

*And thy Remembrance all alone shall live.*

*Within the Book and Volume of my Brain* †.

Is it possible, *Theron*, for the Contemplation of such Goodness, to weaken the Motives, or relax the Springs of Obedience? As soon may *lenient Balms* kill, and *rankest Poisons* cure?—Is such a Belief calculated to discourage Duty, and patronize Licentiousness? Just as much as *vernal Showers* are fitted to cleave the Earth with Chinks, or Summer Suns to glaze the Waters with Ice.—When *Anthony* made an Oration to the Soldiers, on Occasion of *Cæsar's* Death; when He shewed them their honoured Master's Robe, transfixed with so many Daggers; when He reminded them of the Victories they had won, under their assassinated Commander; when He farther informed

\* *Psal.* cxxxvii. 5, 6.

† SHAKESPEAR.



informed them, that their murdered General had remembered them in his Will—had bequeathed all his fine Gardens, and beautiful Walks, to their Use and Delight ;—Heavens ! How they took Fire ! *Revenge* sparkled in their Eyes : *Revenge* flamed in their Bosoms : *Revenge* was all their Cry. They flew to the Houses of the Conspirators ; laid them even with the Ground ; and had they met the Owners, would have tore them Limb from Limb.—Some such Resentment against Sin, will a Sense of our adored REDEEMER's Sufferings excite : Especially, when set home by his Blessed SPIRIT, and considered in Connection with those detestable Iniquities, which caused them ; and with those invaluable Blessings, which were procured by them.—Nothing, nothing is so effectual, to beget the most irreconcilable *Abhorrence* of all Ungodliness ; to make the Remembrance of it, bitter as Worm-wood ; the Temptations to it, horrible as Hell.

Let me remind You of an Incident, related by your favourite Historian *Xenophon*.—*Cyrus* had taken captive the young Prince of *Armenia*, together with his beautiful and blooming Princess ; whom He had lately married, and of whom He was passionately fond. When both were brought to the Tribunal, *Cyrus* asked the Prince ; what He would give, to be reinstated in his Kingdom ?—He answered, with an Air of Indifference ; “ That, as for his Crown, and  
 “ *his own* Liberty, He valued them at a very low  
 “ Rate. But, if *Cyrus* would restore his beloved  
 “ Princess, to her native Dignity and hereditary Possessions, He should infinitely rejoice ; and would  
 “ pay (this He uttered with Tenderness and Ardour)  
 “ would

“ would willingly *pay his Life* for the Purchase.”— Could such a Declaration, so highly endearing, alienate the Affections of the Princess, or induce Her to violate her Fidelity? Let her own Conduct answer the Query. When all the Prisoners were dismissed with Freedom, it is impossible to express, how they were charmed with their royal Benefactor. Some celebrated his martial Accomplishments. Some applauded his social Virtues. All were *prodigal* of their Praises, and *lavish* in grateful Acknowledgments. And You, said the Prince, (addressing himself to his Bride) what think You of *Cyrus*?—I did not observe Him, replied the Princess.—Not observe Him! Upon what then was your Attention fixed?—Upon that *dear* and *generous* Man, who declared, “ He would “ purchase my Liberty, at the Expence of his very “ Life \*.”—Was her Heart impressed, were all her Thoughts ingrossed, by that benevolent *Offer*? And shall ours be less affected with the incomparably more tender and endearing Love of *CHRIST*?—He was not only willing, but *actually* laid down his Life for Us; a Life immensely precious, and of higher Dignity than all Heavens.—He laid down his Life, not for amiable Persons, or worthy Creatures, but for vile Earth, and miserable Sinners.—*Purchasing* thereby for Us and our Children, Privileges of inestimable Worth, and of everlasting Duration.

Will not such Beneficence, so unmerited, so unequaled, win † the most reluctant, and melt the most obdurate

\* Εἶω μὲν καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς παραιμὴν ὥστε μὴ ποτὶ λαβεῖνσαι ταύτην.  
XENOPH. *de Cyri Instit.* Lib. III.

† *Beneficia*, says one of the Antients, *qui invenit, Compedes invenit*. Which fine Sentiment may almost serve as a  
Com-

obdurate Heart? The Heart, which is not wrought upon by this Miracle of Divine Compassion, must be Steel, must be Adamant; quite impenetrable, and absolutely incorrigible.—“ O Thou ever Blessed, “ thou All-gracious REDEEMER, *thy Love to Us is wonderful; passing, I will not say, the Love of Women* \*, but the Power of Language, and the Reach of Thought! Who can hold out against such charming Attractives? Who can resist such heavenly Goodness?—Only let a *Sense* of thy Love be always warm, always operative on our Minds. This shall be instead of a thousand *Arguments* to engage, instead of ten thousand *Motives* to quicken our Obedience.”—Other Motives may produce some external Services, or hypocritical Performances. Terrors may extort the Drudgery of the Hand. Bribes may purchase the Adulation of the Tongue.

Comment, on the beautiful and tender Declaration of GOD by his Prophet *Hosea*; *I drew them to Obedience with Cords of a Man, with Bands of Love*. Chap. xi. 4. HE who made, and intimately knows our Frame, knew that these Motives would be most powerful in Operation; most powerful on Creatures, capable of Love, and susceptible of Gratitude. Therefore He calls them, *The Cords of a Man*.—And if a Deliverance from temporal Bondage, if the Settlement of *Israel* in all the Plenty of *Canaan*, constituted so sweet an Incitement to Duty; doubtless, the everlasting Benefits mentioned by *Aspasio*, together with all the endearing Circumstances of their Procurement, must be abundantly more engaging.—May the SPIRIT from on High rend the *Veil* of Ignorance and Insensibility! Let into our Hearts the Knowledge and Faith of these great evangelical Truths! We shall then want no *farther* Demonstration, either of the Propriety of the Remark, or the Efficacy of the Principles.

\* 2 Sam. i. 26.

Tongue. But this conciliates the Will; this pro-felytes the Affections; this captivates the very Soul; and makes all its Powers like the Chariots of Ammi-nadib \*, ready, expedite, and active in Duty.

Hear the holy Apostle, giving an Account of Him-self and his spiritual State. He speaks in Language somewhat similar, though greatly superior, to the Profession of the *Armenian Princess*.—"So great is  
" the Glory, so rich is the Grace, so superabundant  
" are the Merits of my REDEEMER, *that I am*  
" *determined to know nothing but CHRIST JESUS*  
" *and Him crucified †.*"—Ask the same zealous Apo-  
stle; *What* prompted Him to such indefatigable  
Diligence, and animated him with such invincible  
Fortitude? *Why* did He decline no Toil, and dread  
no Danger; rejoice in Tribulation, and glory in Re-  
proach †; welcome Persecution, and defy Death?

This

\* Cant. vi. 12.

† 1 Cor. ii. 2:

† That supreme Affection to the blessed JESUS, which reigned in the Hearts of his primitive Disciples, could never have been so emphatically displayed by any Strokes of Eloquence, as by their own chearful and heroic Manner of expressing themselves, with relation to their Sufferings.—Far from regretting, *I take pleasure* (says the Apostle) *in Afflictions*; and embrace them, when occurring in my Divine MASTER's Service, with a real Complacency, *evdoux.* 2 Cor. xii. 10.—*To you*, adds the same Apostle, and speaks in a congratulatory Strain, *it is given* (*εχαποδν*) as a desirable Privilege, *to suffer* for the adorable JESUS, Philip. i. 29.—St. Luke, recording the abusive and cruel Outrages, committed on two Dis-ciples, for preaching boldly in the Name of CHRIST, uses a Phrase remarkably gallant and spirited; *They de-parted from the Council rejoicing, οἱ καλῶς ὠνόμασαν ἀτιμωθέντες, that they were counted worthy to suffer Shame*; had the Ho-nour of being vilified and reproached, in so venerable and glorious



This is his Reply; "*The Love of CHRIST constraineth \* me*; beareth me on, with much the same strong, steady, prevailing Influence, which Winds and Tide exert, when they waft the Vessel, to its destined Harbour."

Shall we hear what another Disciple, one of the most advanced Proficients in Divine Love, says upon the Subject? One, who learned his Knowledge, not in the School of Philosophy, but on his SAVIOUR's Bosom. *This is the Love of GOD, that we walk after his Commandments* †. This is the natural Fruit, this the certain Evidence, of Love to that glorious, transcendent, and adorable BEING. What? Not that We supinely neglect, much less that We profanely violate, his sacred Precepts; but that with Assiduity and Delight, We make them the Rule of our Conduct.—*Charity edifieth* ‡: this Divine Love, far from razing the Foundations, far from demolishing the Structure, *buildeth up* || the fair Fabric of universal Godliness.

Let me borrow an Illustration from your own Letter. When a Pebble is cast into the smooth Canal, it moves the Center, and forms a Circle. The

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glorious a Cause.—This Passage is a fine Exemplification of the Figure, which Rhetoricians style *Oxymorum*. And Horace's—*Dulce Periculum—Splendide mendax—Quo beatus Vulnere*—seem flat and jejune upon the Comparifon.

Acts v. 41.

\* Could You station a Coward, in the Midst of a numerous Army advancing to the Battle; or rather, could you place a Boat on the impetuous Cataracts of the Nile; You would see what is meant by the significant Word,

2 Cor. v. 14.

† 2 John ver. 6.

‡ 1 Cor. viii. 1.

|| *Onodupar*.

first creates a second: the second breaks into a third: they continue to multiply and expand themselves, till the whole Surface is covered with circular Undulations. Thus, the Love of an All-gracious REDEEMER \*, when shed abroad in the Soul by the HOLYGHOST †, will diffuse itself through every intel-

\* I cannot but think, the Reasoning is much more just, and the Principle much more efficacious, in *Aspasio's* Manner of stating the Affair, than in the following famous Lines:

*Self-love but serves the virtuous Mind to wake,  
As the small Pebble stirs the peaceful Lake:  
The Center mov'd, a Circle strait succeeds,  
Another still, and still another spreads.  
Friend, Parent, Neighbour, first it will embrace,  
His Country next, and next all human Race:  
Wide and more wide th' O'erflowings of the Mind  
Take every Creature in of every Kind.*

Self-love too often acts on the Affections, as a Blast on the Leaves, shrivels and contracts them. But the Love of CHRIST, like a vernal Sun on the tender Buds, opens and expands them; till they become wide, as the Extent of his gracious Redemption; wide as the Compass of his rational Creation.—By Self-love I am almost necessarily determined to malign the Persons, who cross my Inclinations, and obstruct my Interests. From the Love of CHRIST, I have a cogent Reason, and a most prevailing Inducement to love my very Enemies.—How does St. Peter analyze this Subject? not in Mr. Pope's, not in Lord Bolingbroke's Method. *Godliness*, or a supreme Love to the Gracious GOD, He represents as the Root or Trunk: then *brotherly Kindness*, or an affectionate Regard to Relations, Friends, Neighbours, as some of the grand and master Branches: after this *Charity*, or a diffusive Good-will to all Mankind, as the Spread of Boughs, which complete and adorn the Tree. 2 Pet. i. 7.

† Rom. v. 5.

intellectual Faculty, and extend to every Species of Duty. Till the whole Heart is filled with the Image, and the whole Behaviour regulated by the Law of the Blessed GOD.—So that I am persuaded, there is a great deal of Truth and Solidity, as every One must acknowledge, there is a peculiar Spirit and Beauty, in the Apostrophe of our Poet ;

*Talk they of Morals? O thou bleeding Love!*

*Thou Maker of new Morals to Mankind,*

*The grand Morality is Love of T H E E \*.*

You mentioned the *Loadstone*, as most signally and most extensively serviceable in the sea-faring Business. Such is *Faith*, so efficacious, in practical *Christianity*.—This, perhaps, You think a scanty and defective Principle. The Property of shewing the northern Part of the World, may seem equally mean and inconsiderable. But as the one is the very Soul of Navigation, the other is the very Life of Holiness.—It is somewhat like the Stone, which the *Babylonian* Monarch saw in his Dream, cut from the Rock without Hands †. Which though despicable to human Appearance, was mighty in Operation; destroyed the superb Statue; became a great Mountain, and filled the whole Earth. Thus will Faith exert and diffuse its kindly, yet triumphant Energy; to every Corruption, that it may be subdued; to every Virtue, that it may be cherished.

Faith is a real Persuasion, That the Blessed *JESUS* has shed his Blood for me, and fulfilled all Righteousness in my Stead: that through this great Atonement and meritorious Obedience, He has purchased, even

M 2

for

\* Night-Thoughts, N<sup>o</sup> IV.

† Dan. ii. 34.



for my sinful Soul, Reconciliation with GOD, sanctifying Grace, and every spiritual Blessing\*.

When the ALMIGHTY sunk the Cavities of the Ocean, and replenished them with the liquid Element, He provided an inexhaustible Source of Moisture, for the Refreshment of every Animal, and the Nutriment of every Vegetable. In like manner, where-ever He works this true Faith, He plants the Seed of *universal* Holiness, and provides for the Propagation of *every* Virtue. This Persuasion of the Divine Good-will, overcomes our natural Reluctance, and excites a fervent Desire, to please our most merciful FATHER. This Experience of the abundant Grace of CHRIST, attracts and assimilates the Soul; turning it into his amiable Likeness, “as the Wax is turned to the imprinted Seal.”—What will be the Language of such a Person?

“Did my exalted MASTER empty Himself  
“and become poor, that his most unworthy Ser-  
“vant might be *filled with all the Fulness of GOD*†?  
“And shall not I cheerfully deny myself the expen-  
“sive Pleasures of the World, that I may have  
“somewhat to bestow on his needy Children?—  
“Has the Death of CHRIST, as a Punishment,  
“satisfied

\* This Definition of *Faith* may possibly, at the first View, dissatisfy and alarm even some pious People; including, as they apprehend, too great a Degree of *Affurance*. But if they please to take it in *Connection*, with the Explanation and Adjustment, delivered in the *Sixteenth Dialogue*, I hope, all Cause of Disapprobation, or Surprise will vanish. I flatter myself, that the Sentiment will be found, not only comfortable for the Sinner, but agreeable to Scripture; and truly *unexceptionable*, as well as highly *desirable*.

† Eph. iii. 19.



" satisfied the most rigorous Justice for my Sins; as  
 " a Price, has it reedemed me from every Evil; and,  
 " as a Sacrifice, made my Peace with GOD Most  
 " High? And shall I not, by these *Mercies* of my  
 " dying LORD, be induced to present all the  
 " Members of my Body, and all the Faculties of  
 " my Soul, as a *living Sacrifice* \* to his Honour?  
 " To be employed in his Service, and resigned to  
 " his Will?—Do I believe, that my SAVIOUR  
 " has not only rescued me from Hell, but established  
 " my Title to all the *Blessings* included in the Pro-  
 " mises, and all the *Felicity* laid up in Heaven? And  
 " can I neglect to seek those invaluable Blessings, or  
 " forbear to aspire after this immense Felicity? Can  
 " I be so *ungrateful* as to affront, so *insensible* as to for-  
 " get, the infinitely beneficent AUTHOR of both?  
 " —Am I persuaded, that the PRINCE of Peace is  
 " entered into Glory as my *Forerunner* †, and has  
 " prepared Mansions of Bliss for my final Reception?  
 " And shall I not follow Him thither in my Hopes  
 " and my Affections? Be as a Pilgrim below, and  
 " have my Conversation above?—Is not this a most  
 " sweet and effectual Method of gaining my Heart,  
 " and if my Heart, then all my Powers, to his bles-  
 " sed Self?"

Such my dear *Theron*, will be the *Effects* of Faith.  
 Therefore it is not in vain, much less to the Dis-  
 couragement of real Virtue, that the Scripture lays  
 such a Stress upon Faith: so frequently urges the  
 Importance and Necessity of Faith: represents Faith,  
 as the principal Work of the Divine SPIRIT, and

M 3

the

\* Rom. xii. 1.

† Heb. vi. 20.

the great Instrument of receiving Salvation. Because it is a sure, a sovereign Means of *purifying the Heart* \*, and never fails to *work by Love* †.—Was Faith, as some People are apt to imagine, like a Candle put under a Bushel, or like the Lamps which burn in Sepulchres; it would then be an insignificant Labour to inculcate it, and no better than an empty Flourish of Words, to celebrate it. But nothing is more certain, than that Faith is a *vital*, an *operative*, a *victorious Principle*.

*CHRIST* is a Store-house of all Good. Whatever is necessary to remove our Guilt, whatever is expedient for renewing our Nature, whatever is proper to fit Us for the eternal Fruition of *GOD*, all this is laid up in *CHRIST*. And all this is received by Faith, for Application, Use, and Enjoyment.—Accordingly, when *Zaccheus* BELIEVED, He commenced a new Man: his Bowels yearned with Compassion: the rapacious Publican became a Friend to the Needy, and a Father to the Poor ‡.—When the *Macedonians* BELIEVED, how eminently was their Spirit ennobled, and their Practice improved! Though pressed with Afflictions, their Souls overflowed with Joy; and even in the deepest Poverty, they signalized themselves by the Abundance of their Liberality §.—When the *first Converts* BELIEVED, the Change in their Behaviour was so remarkable, the Holiness of their Lives so exemplary; that they won the Favour, and commanded the Respect,

\* Acts xv. 9. † Gal. v. 6. ‡ Luke xix. 8.

§ 2 Cor. viii. 2. Here is, especially in the Original, as fine an *Antithesis*, perhaps, as ever was penned. Since my last Notes were so copious, I shall forego the Pleasure

spect, of all the People \*.—In short; it is as impossible for the Sun to be in his meridian Sphere, and not to dissipate Darkness, or diffuse Light; as for Faith to exist in the Soul, and not exalt the Temper, and meliorate the Conduct.—That my dear Theron may be *established* in Faith, may *increase* in Faith, may *abound* in Faith, is the most affectionate Wish, that thought can suggest, or Friendship adopt. May his Faith therefore be established like the Mountain-Oaks; increase like the progressive Stream; till it spreads and abounds like the overflowing Flood †!

I intended to have closed my Letter, and confirmed my Point, by a *very memorable* Story. But however your Patience may persevere, my Time fails, and my Hand is weary. The next Post, if nothing unexpected intervenes, shall bring You the Sequel. May it, when brought to my Friend, be as a Nail fastened in a sure Place, and give the Rivet of Conviction to all these important Truths!—In the mean Time, or rather at all Times, I remain

*Cordially and invariably Yours,*

ASPASIO.

sure of particularizing the Beauties of this Clause. I leave it to the Lover of sacred Literature, to admire the Apostle's Expression, to be charmed with the Spirit of the Macedonian Believers, and to derive Edification from both.

\* Acts. ii. 47.

† These Images We may venture to style *beautiful*, because they are borrowed from the Apostle; *Col. ii. 7.* *Phil. i. 25.* *2 Thess. i. 3.*





## LETTER XI.

ASPASIO to THERON.

Dear THERON,

**F**AITH in the imputed Righteousness of **JESUS CHRIST** is a fundamental Principle, in that invaluable System of sacred and divine Philosophy. — **THE GOSPEL**. By which the Heavenly **TEACHER** is continually training up Millions of rational and immortal Creatures, for the true Perfection of their Nature; for the final Fruition of their **GOD**; or, in other Words, for a State of consummate Happiness and everlasting Exaltation. — In this School, may You and I be humble *Students*, and daily *Proficients*! While Others are ambitious of glittering Distinctions, and sounding Titles, may it be our highest Aim, our greatest Glory, to answer the Character — of **BELIEVERS**! By this Character, the Supreme **LORD** distinguishes his chosen People, and denominates the Heirs of Salvation. — This Character stands fairest in the *Book of Life*, and brightest in the *Annals of Eternity*. — This Character, however neglected or disesteemed among Men, will be remembered and had in Honour, when the pompous Names of *Satesman* and *Generalissimo* are known no more.

As Faith is of such singular and extensive Efficacy in genuine Christianity, methinks, I would have

all



all our Meditations *terminate* on its glorious Object, and be calculated to *invigorate* so beneficial a Principle.—When we reflect on that stupendous Act, the Creation of the World out of Nothing; let Us remember, it was *HIS* Act, who *obtained eternal Redemption for Us*. When we contemplate that immense Theatre of Wonders, the Heavens and their shining Hosts; let Us not forget, that they are all *HIS* Work, who *brought in everlasting Righteousness for Us*.—Do We turn our Thoughts to the Ocean, that spacious and magnificent Canal, which covers more than half the Globe? It was formed by *HIS* Word, and is obedient to *HIS* Will, who *loved Us and washed Us from our Sins in his own Blood*. Do We take a View of the Earth, that grand and inexhaustible Magazine, which furnishes such a Multiplicity of Conveniencies, for so many Millions of Creatures? It is all *HIS* Property, and wholly at *HIS* Disposal, who *emptied \* Himself for our Sake*, and *had not where to lay his Head*.—For thus saith the inspired Philosopher; thus saith the Oracle of Revelation; *All Things were made BY Him, and FOR Him* †.

The great CREATOR has *enriched* this habitable Globe with a Profusion of Good. He has *adorned* it with a Variety, an Order, and a Beauty, which are perfectly charming. He has *ennobled* it with a Dignity, a Sublimity, and a Grandeur, which are at once delightful and astonishing. In all this, Reason cannot but discern a clear Manifestation of Power, a bright Display of Wisdom, and a rich Demonstration of Benignity.—But will the CREA-  
TOR

\* *EXPIATORY* SAULOR. Phil. ii. 7.

† Col. i. 16.

FOR himself vouchsafe to be made Flesh, on Purpose that He my *obey* and *die* for his guilty Creatures? This is what, neither the utmost Penetration of Men, nor the very superior Intelligence of Angels, could ever have demonstrated, discovered, or conceived. This exceeds whatever the Elements have produced, whatever the Sun has beheld, as much as the Extent and Magnificence of the planetary System exceed the Dimensions and the Furniture of a Shepherd's Hut.—To reveal this, is the blessed Peculiarity of the Gospel. To know and believe this, is the distinguishing Prerogative of a Christian. To *apply* this, to *dwell* upon this, to *connect* this with all our Observations of the Universe, should be our favourite and habitual Employ. This will improve Wonder into Devotion, and raise the Entertainments of Science into the Joy of Salvation. This will render every philosophical Speculation a Strengtheners of our Faith; and make the various Scenes of Nature, a Guide to Grace, and a Step to Glory.—When this is done, then all Things attain their proper End; and as they are *by* CHRIST, so they are *for* CHRIST.

But I forget myself, my Business, and my Promise. I am to establish the Point by incontestable Fact, not to embellish it by loose Harangue. With Pleasure I address myself to discharge the Obligation; and exemplify, in a very memorable Instance, the *Power of Faith on religious Practice*.—From whence shall I fetch my Exemplification? From the Memoirs of the indefatigable Apostle of the Gentiles? Here I find one, most concisely, and at the same Time most forcibly displayed.

After

After these Things were ended, says the sacred Historian, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when He had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there, I must also see Rome \*.—Who can observe, and not admire, this plain unambitious Manner of relating a Series of Labours, the most signally successful, and most extensively useful? Nothing in human Conduct ever surpassed the Greatness of the one, and perhaps nothing in historical Composition ever equaled the Simplicity of the Other.

St. Paul had already reduced Ephesus and Asia to the Obedience of CHRIST. He had already brought Macedonia and Achaia into Subjection to the Gospel. He had long ago erected the Standard, and spread the Triumphs of Christianity in the Regions of Arabia. Yet, as if He had hitherto atchieved nothing, He bends his Forces towards Jerusalem. Then he marks out Rome for the Seat of his spiritual Warfare. After this, he forms the same beneficent Design upon Spain: including, in his comprehensive Plan, the Metropolis and the Boundaries † of the known World.—The Universe is but just large enough, to be the Scene of his Action; He never discontinues the charitable Campaign, but with the last Breath of his Life; and He speaks of this unintermitted Course of arduous and dangerous Services, as if He was only going to make some friendly Visit,

or

\* Acts xix. 21.

† Spain was then supposed to be the Boundary of the Western, as the Ganges was reckoned the Extremity of the Eastern World.

*Omnibus in Terris quæ sunt a Gadibus usque  
Auroram & Gangem.*

Juv. Sat. X.



or join in a Party of innocent Pleasure ; After I have been at Jerusalem, I must also see Rome \*.

Which

\* I am quite charmed, I must confess, with this very simple, but incomparably gallant Manner of the Apostle's speaking. Far beyond all the Pomp of Panegyric, it displays the Hero.

When a Handful of Spartans undertook to defend the Pass of Thermopylae, against the whole Army of Persia; so prodigious, it was reported, were the Multitudes of the Persians, that the very Flight of their Arrows, would intercept the Shining of the Sun. Then, said Dienecees one of the Spartan Leaders, *We shall have the Advantage of fighting in the Shade.*—Just before the Battle of Agincourt, News was brought to King Henry's Camp, that the French were exceedingly numerous ; and would take the Field, with more than six times the Number of the English Troops. To which the brave Captain Gam immediately replied, *Is it so ? Then there are enough to be cut in pieces, enough to be taken Prisoners, and enough to run away.*—A commanding Officer, I think, among the Royalists, being besieged by the parliamentary Forces, was summoned to surrender the Castle. The Summons He rejected, and treated with Contempt. Upon this, the Enemy threatened, that, if He persisted in his Resolution, the Walls should without farther Delay, be battered to the Ground. *What if they are ?* was his Answer. *I am not obliged to rebuild them.*

Such calm and undaunted Sentiments, amidst Circumstances of the most imminent Danger, argue an uncommon Fortitude and Superiority of Mind. But, if We consider the Nature of the Apostle's Enterprize ; that it was nothing less than an open Attack on the Empire of Satan ; a declared War against the whole idolatrous World ; all which was to be attended with Persecution and Imprisonment, was to end in Martyrdom and Death.—If We consider this, I believe, nothing will appear, at once so humble and so exalted, so modest yet so magnanimous, as the Turn and Air of his Expression ; *After I have been at Jerusalem, I must also see Rome.*



Let. II. ASPASIO to THERON. 189

Which of your *Alexanders*, which of your *Cæsars*, which of all the Heroes renowned in *Grecian* or *Roman* Story, can vie with the Zeal and Magnanimity of this poor, despised Tent-maker? So *poor*, that he was constrained to work with his own Hands, for a Morsel of Bread: so *despised*, that He was frequently treated as the Offscouring of all Things. Notwithstanding all these Discouragements, what did He not attempt, what did He not accomplish, for the Honour of his MASTER, and the Good of his Fellow-creatures?—He embarks in a Shallop; He has neither Shield nor Spear; yet he purposes to command the Ocean, and conquer the Globe. What *Greatness* of Soul was here! He expects \* nothing but Poverty, Contempt, and Death; yet his Heart is big with the Hope of enriching, ennobling, and saving Ages and Generations. What *Benevolence* of Temper was this!—Should you inquire, concerning this illustrious Champion of the Cross; *Who* were his potent Auxiliaries? None but the Divine SPIRIT.—*What* were his mighty Weapons? Nothing but the Word of Truth and Grace.—*Whence* proceeded his intrepid, his enterprizing, his all-conquering Resolution? Only from Faith, a lively Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*.

This, I think, is a sufficient Confirmation of my Doctrine.—Nevertheless I have another Instance to produce. One that was exhibited in an Age, when the glorious Object of our Faith shone with dim Lustre, and with distant Beams. Yet it may justly be admired, and will hardly be eclipsed, by the most inlightened among the *Christian* Saints.—To keep  
You

\* Acts xx, 23.

You longer in Suspence, the Case I mean, is that which *Moses* records, and the Apostle celebrates. **BY FAITH** *Abraham*, when he was tried, offered up *Isaac* : and He that had received the Promises, offered up his only begotten Son \*.—As this is so singular an Example of the efficacious and triumphant Operation of Faith ; unequalled in any Nation of the World, or under any Dispensation of Religion ; You will give me leave to dwell a little on some of its marvellous Circumstances.

*Abraham* was an eminent and distinguished Servant of the Most High GOD. Favoured with peculiar Manifestations of the Divine Will, and dignified with the honourable Title of his MAKER's Friend †. Yet even this Man, is harassed with a long Succession of Troubles ; and, which was reckoned in those Ages the most deplorable Calamity, goes childless ‡.

Long He waits, worshipping GOD with the most patient Resignation. At length, an Oracle from the LORD gives Him Hope, gives Him Assurance of a Son.

\* Heb. xi. 17. † 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isa. xli. 8.

‡ There was so much Gall in this Calamity, that it embittered every other Species of Happiness. Visited by this Affliction, the Patriarch could taste no Joy in his late signal Victory ; all his worldly Prosperity was insipid ; and He seems to have been incapable of relishing any other Comfort ; *What wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?* Gen. xv. 2.—I would intreat the Reader to take particular Notice of this Circumstance. It will have the same Effect upon the Representation of *Abraham's* Obedience, and the whole Series of his Difficulties, as a magnifying Glass has upon the Objects to which it is applied.

Son. Joyfully he receives the Promise, and rests in humble Expectation of its Accomplishment.—Several Years run their Rounds, but no pleasing Infant prattles in his Arms, or is dandled upon his Knees. At last, the Handmaid becomes pregnant. But what a *Disappointment* was here! This is the Son of the Bond-woman, not of the free.

How afflicting the Case of this excellent Person! His Kinsfolk and Acquaintance see their Olive-branches, flourishing round about their Tables. Even his ungodly Neighbours have Children at their Desire, and leave the Residue of their Substance for their Babes. But *Abraham*, the Worshiper of the ALMIGHTY, the Favourite of Heaven—this *Abraham* is destitute of an Heir, to support his Name, to propagate his Family, and inherit the Blessing.—O the Straits! to which the Believer is sometimes reduced! How does a sovereign Providence try his Faith, as it were in a Furnace of Fire! Not that it may be consumed, but refined, and come forth with augmented Lustre; to the Praise of *ever-faithful, all-sufficient* Grace.

GOD is pleased to renew the Grant, and assure Him more explicitly, That *Sarah* shall have a Son. But this Notice comes at a very late Period in Life; when *Sarah* is advanced in Years, and too old, according to the Course of Nature, to conceive. However, the pious Patriarch *staggers not through Unbelief*; but *hopes even against Hope*\*.—Is it improbable? Is it difficult? Nay, is it to all human Appearance impossible? So much the fitter for the Exertion, and so much

\* Rom. iv. 18, 20.



much the more proper for the Display of Almighty Power.

At last, the Gift, so earnestly desired, is vouchsafed. *Sarah* has a *Child*—a *Son*—an *Isaac*. One who should be a Source of Consolation and Delight to his Parents; should fill their Mouth with Laughter\*, and their Tongue with Joy.—With tender Care, doubtless, this pleasant Plant is reared. Many Prayers are put up, for his long Life, and great Happiness. The fond Parents watch over him, as over the Apple of their own Eye. Their Life is bound up in the Life of the Lad†.—He grows in Grace, as he grows in Stature. So amiable is his Temper, and so engaging his Behaviour, as could not fail of endearing him even to a Stranger; how much more to such indulgent Parents, after so long a State of Barrenness, and so many Expectations so frequently frustrated.

Now, methinks, we are ready to congratulate the happy Sire; and flatter Ourselves, that his Tribulations have an End. That the Storms, which ruffled the Noon of Life, are blown over; and the Evening of his Age is becoming calm and serene.—But let not Him that girdeth on his Harness, boast Himself, as He that putteth it off‡. Our Warfare on Earth is never accomplished, till We bow our Head, and give up the Ghost. The sharpest, the severest Tryal is still behind. GOD, the supreme and uncontrollable GOD, demands the Child. 'Tis the Will of Heaven, that He make his Exit, just as He arrives at Manhood.—“Where now, *Abraham*, are  
“all

\* *Psal.* cxxvi. 2. This is the Import of the Hebrew Name *Isaac*.

† *Gen.* xlv. 30.

‡ *1 Kings* xx. 11.



“ all thy pleasing Prospects? How often didst Thou  
 “ say, in thy fond delighted Heart; *This same shall*  
 “ *comfort Us concerning our Trouble* \*. Many have  
 “ been my Sorrows; but this Child shall dry up my  
 “ Tears, and bring me to my Grave in Peace.—  
 “ Alas! This lovely Flower is to be cut down, in its  
 “ fairest fullest Bloom. All thy shining Hopes are  
 “ overcast in a Moment.”

Abraham †; says GOD — *Abraham* knows the  
 Voice. It is the Voice of condescending Goodness.  
 He had often heard it with a Rapture of Delight.—  
 Instantly He replies, “ *Here I am. Speak, LORD;*  
 “ for thy Servant is all Attention.” Hoping, no  
 doubt, to receive some fresh Manifestation of the di-  
 vine *Good-will*, to Himself and his Family; or some  
 new Discovery of the Method, in which the divine  
*Wisdom* would accomplish the Promises, *I will multiply*  
*thy Seed; I will make thy Seed as the Dust of the Earth;*  
*and in thy Seed shall all the Families of the Earth be*  
*blest.*

VOL. III.

N

Take

\* Gen. v. 29.

† The Sentence, with which the inspired Historian in-  
 troduces this affecting Narrative, is unhappily translated  
 in our Bibles; *וַיִּטְעַן אֱלֹהִים אֶת אַבְרָהָם* GOD did tempt Abra-  
 ham.—This Expression seems, more than seems to clash  
 with the Doctrine of St. James, Chap. i. ver. 13. And  
 cannot but sound harsh to those Ears, which have been  
 accustomed to understand by *Tempter* and *Tempting*, Per-  
 sons utterly odious, and Practices extremely pernicious.  
 —Whereas, the true and natural Signification of the  
 Original is, He tried or explored. GOD sounded the  
 Depth, and measured the Height of his Servant's Faith;  
 in order to erect an everlasting Monument of the victo-  
 rious Efficacy of this sacred Principle; and exhibit an  
 illustrious Pattern to all them, who should hereafter be-  
 lieve.

*Take thy Son*; adds GOD. And might not *Abraham* reasonably expect, that, since his Son was advanced to Years of Maturity, He should be directed, how to settle Him in the World with Honour and Advantage; where to find a virtuous and fruitful Partner of his Bed?—He is commanded, not barely to take his Son, but his *only* Son; his Son *Isaac*; whom He *loved*. How must these affecting Images awaken all that soft Complacency, and all that tender Triumph, which are known only to the fondly-feeling Heart of a Parent! Must not such an Introduction, so remarkably endearing, heighten his Expectation of some signal Mercy, to be conferred on the beloved Youth; and would it not render the Blessing peculiarly acceptable, more than doubly welcome?

Was he not then startled? Was he not horribly amazed? When, instead of some renewed Expression of the Divine Favour, He received the following Orders. *Take now thy Son—thy only Son—Isaac—whom Thou lovest—and get Thee into the Land of Mo-riah, and offer Him there for a Burnt-offering, upon one of the Mountains which I will tell thee of* \*.—

Was ever Message so alarming? Each Word more piercing to parental Ears, than the keenest Dagger to the Heart. Every Clause brings an additional Load of Misery; till the *whole* Command swells into the most accumulated and aggravated Woe.

*Abraham, take thy Son*.—Who, but *Abraham*, could have forbore remonstrating and pleading, on such an Occasion?—*Ananias*, being charged with a Commission to *Saul* the Persecutor, takes upon Him to argue the Case with his Almighty SOVEREIGN. LORD, I have heard by Many concerning this Man,

how

\* Gen. xxii. 2.

how much Evil He hath done to thy Saints at Jerusalem; and here He hath Authority from the chief Priests, to bind all that call upon thy Name \*. Sure, it can never be safe or expedient, to present myself voluntarily before Him; who came hither breathing out Threatenings and Slaughter against me. What is this, but to court Danger; and run, with open Eyes, into Ruin?—Thus Ananias: and, with how much greater Appearance of Reason, might Abraham have replied?

“LORD, Shall I lose my Child? Lose Him, \* almost as soon as I have received Him? Didst Thou give Him, only to tantalize thy Servant? Remember, gracious GOD, the Name he bears. How shall He answer its cheering Import? How shall He be a Source of Satisfaction to his Parents, or the Father of many Nations; if Thou takest Him away in his unmarried State, and the very Prime of his Years?

“If Sin lies at the Door, let me expiate the Guilt. Let thousands of Rams, let every Bullock in my Stalls, bleed at thy Altar. My Wealth, blessed LORD, and all my Goods, are nothing in comparison of my Isaac. Command me to be stript of my Possessions; command me to roam, as a Fugitive and a Vagabond in the Earth; and I will magnify thy holy Name. Only let my Child, my dear Child, be spared.

“Or, if nothing will appease thy Indignation but human Blood, let my Death be the Sacrifice. Upon me be the Vengeance. I am old and grey-headed. The best of my Days are past, and the best of my Services done. If this tottering Wall

N 2

“tumbles,

\* Acts ix. 13, 14.



“ tumbles, there will be little, or no Cause for  
 “ Regret. But, if the Pillar of my House, and  
 “ the Foundation of my Hopes—if *He* be snatched  
 “ from me, what Good will my Life do me? *O my*  
 “ *Son! my Son! would GOD I might die for Thee\**.

“ If it must be a blooming Youth, in the Flower  
 “ of his Days, be pleased, most merciful GOD, to  
 “ select the Victim from some *fruitful* Family. There  
 “ are those, who abound in Children. Children  
 “ are multiplied unto them; and though many were  
 “ removed, yet would their Table be full. There  
 “ are those, who have Flocks and Herds; whereas,  
 “ I have only this one little Lamb†; the very Solace  
 “ of my Soul, and the Stay of my declining Years.  
 “ And shall this be taken away, while all *those* are  
 “ left?”

Yes, *Abraham*; it is thy Son, and not Another's,  
 that is marked for the Victim.—What Distress, had  
 He not been supported by Faith, what exquisite  
 Distress must have overwhelmed this affectionate  
 Parent! How could He refrain from crying out, and  
 with a Flood of Tears?—“ If the Decree cannot  
 “ be reversed; if it must be the Fruit of my own  
 “ Body; O! that *Ishmael*, the Son of the Hand-  
 “ maid—How shall I speak it? My Heart bleeds at  
 “ the Thought; at the Thought even of *his* expiring  
 “ Agonies, and untimely Death. But as for *Isaac*,  
 “ the Son of my beloved Spouse, the Son of my old  
 “ Age, the Crown of all my Labours—How?  
 “ How shall I survive such a Loss? The Blow that  
 “ goes to his Heart, must be fatal to Us both.

“ Yet,

\* 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

† 2 Sam. xii. 3.



“ Yet, if He *must* die, and there is no Remedy;  
 “ may He not at least expire by a natural Dissolu-  
 “ tion? May not some common Distemper unloose  
 “ the Cords of Life, and lay Him down gently in  
 “ the Tomb? May not his fond Mother and myself  
 “ seal his closing Eyes, and soften his dying Pangs  
 “ by our tender Offices?”

No, *Abraham*. Thy Son must be *slaughtered* on the Altar. He shall have no other Bed of Death, than the Pile of hewn Wood; no other Winding-sheet, than his own clotted Gore. The sacrificing Knife, and not any common Disease, shall bring Him to his End.—And think not to satisfy thy sorrowing Fondness, by paying Him the last Honours of a decent Interment. It is the LORD's Will, that He be cut in Pieces; consumed to Ashes; and made a *Burnt-offering*. So that nothing shall remain, to be preserved, or embalmed. It shall not be in thy Power to sooth thy Grief, by resorting to his Grave; and weeping at his Sepulchre; and saying—*Here lies Isaac*.

“ But if all must be executed; GOD grant,  
 “ these Eyes may never behold the dismal Tragedy!  
 “ If my *Isaac* must be bound Hand and Foot for the  
 “ Slaughter; if He must receive the Steel into his  
 “ Bosom; and welter in his own innocent Blood;  
 “ Heaven forbid, that I should *behold* so killing a  
 “ Spectacle.”

Even this Mitigation cannot be granted. Thou must not only be an Eye-witness of his Agony, but be the *Executioner* of thy *Isaac*. Thy Hands must lift the deadly Weapon; thy Hands must point it to the beloved Breast; thy own Hands must urge its Way,

through the gushing Veins, and shivering Flesh, till it be plunged in the throbbing Heart. GOD will not permit the Work to be done by Another. The Father, the Father must be the Butcher.

Is not the wretched Father *stunned* and *thunder-struck*? Does He not stand fixed in Horror, and speechless with Grief. What Words can be mournful enough to express his Sorrows?—Unheard of, shocking Affair! Nature *recoils* at the very Thought! How then can the best of Fathers perform the Deed?—How shall He answer it to the Wife of his Bosom, the Mother of the lovely Youth?—How can He justify it to the World? They will never be persuaded, that the GOD of Goodness can delight in Cruelty, or authorize so horrid an Action.—Will they not take up a *taunting* Proverb, and say at every Turn? “There goes the Man, the Monster rather, “that has imbrued his Hands in his own Son’s “Blood! This is He that pretends to Piety; and “yet could be so savage, as to assassinate, coolly and “deliberately assassinate an only Child!”—Might not Thousands of such Reflections croud into his Thoughts, and rack his very Soul?

But GOD is unchangeable. Positive is his Word, and must be obeyed. Obeyed immediately too. Take *now* thy Son. The LORD’s Command requireth Speed. No Time is to be lost, in bidding Adieu to his Relations, or in fruitless Supplications for revoking the Doom.—Nay, *cheerfully* as well as instantly must this Command be fulfilled. The Great JEHOVAH expects Alacrity in his Service.

Prodigious Trial indeed! Yet not too great for a Faith,

Faith, which the Divine SPIRIT infuses, and the Divine SPIRIT sustains.

The Patriarch knew full well, that Obedience is no Obedience, unless it be willing and chearful. Therefore He consults not with Flesh and Blood. He is deaf to the Arguings of carnal Reason, and regards not the Yearnings of paternal Affection. Without a *murmuring* Word, without a *Moment's* Delay\*, He sets forward on his Journey. Not so much as betraying the least Uneasiness, to alarm his Wife; nor heaving the least Sigh, to surprise his Attendants.—And canst Thou, *Abraham*, canst Thou persist in thy Purpose? Can thy Heart firmly resolve, can thy Hand steadily execute, this inexpressibly severe Task? Most triumphant Faith indeed! Deservedly art Thou styled, *The Father of the Faithful*†. Thy Faith is stronger than all the Ties of Affection; stronger than all the Pleas of Nature, or all the Terrors of Death—even of a Death, far more dreadful than thy own.

And now must He travel, during three tedious, and One would think, most melancholy Days. With his *Isaac* constantly before his Eyes; with the bloody Scene continually in his Apprehensions; and nothing to divert his Mind, from dwelling on every bitter Circumstance, and all the grievous Consequences.—*On the third Day, Abraham lifted up his Eyes and beheld afar off the appointed Place.* His Servants are ordered to keep their Distance: while Himself, with the Fire and the Knife in his Hands;

N 4 and

\* For it is written, *He arose early in the Morning.* Ver. 3:

† Rom. iv. 18.



and his Son, with the Burden of Wood on his Shoulders, *went both of them together*.—Who does not pity the sweet Youth, toiling under that Load, which must soon reek with his Blood, and soon reduce him to Ashes?—Mean while the intended Victim, wondering to see all these Preparations made, and no proper Animal near, asks this pertinent Question; *My Father, behold the Fire and the Wood! But where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?*—Sure, this endearing Speech, which discovered such a Knowledge of Religion, and such a Concern for its Duties, must rouse the Father's Anguish, and shake his Determination. How can He be the Death of so much Innocence, and so much Piety?

Faith overcomes all Difficulties. Unmoved and inflexible, the Patriarch replies; *GOD will provide Himself a Lamb for a Burnt-offering, my Son* \*. After this He discloses the strange, the startling Secret; “Thou thyself, my dear Child, art destined to this Purpose. The GOD who bestowed Thee on my longing Desires, is pleased to require thee again “ at

\* *Abraham* in this Answer, like many of the other Prophets in their Predictions, seems not to have *thoroughly understood* the Import of his own Words. What He Himself meant, I apprehend, is represented in the Paraphrase of his Speech. Yet GOD so over-ruled his Tongue, that it more fully expressed the divine Decree, than the parental Idea.

*GOD will provide Himself a Lamb for a Burnt-offering, my Son.* Thus the Words are placed in the Hebrew. *My Son* comes last, and closes the Reply. That the tender Accents may be left to vibrate on the Father's Ear, and the dear distressing Image continue playing before his Mind.—This, I think, is a Deficacy not to be overlooked, and increases the Pathos of the Narrative.



“at my Hand. The LORD gave, and the LORD  
“taketh away, let Us both adore the Name of the  
“LORD. Let Us confide in his promised Good-  
“ness, and unanimously profess, *Though He slay me,*  
“*yet will I trust in Him.*”—It does not appear, that  
the amiable Youth *resisted* or *gainsayed*. He had  
Strength enough to oppose, and Speed enough to  
escape\*, the Attempts of an aged Father. Either  
or both of which, the Law of Self-preservation might  
seem to dictate, and the Light of Reason to justify.  
But *Isaac* knew, that his Father was a Prophet.  
In this prophetic Character, He sees and acknow-  
ledges the Warrant of Heaven. And since his  
CREATOR calls, He is content to go.—Excel-  
lent *Isaac*! Who does not admire thy Courage?  
Who is not charmed with thy Resignation? And  
must We, in a few Minutes, must We see Thee a  
pale, a bloody, a breathless Corpse?

Methinks, I shudder as We draw near the direful  
Catastrophe. The Altar is built; the Wood lain in  
Order: all Things are ready for the solemn Service.  
And *Isaac* offers his willing Throat to the Knife.—  
Nevertheless, that the Work of Destiny may be sure,  
and no one Particular relating to a Sacrifice omitted,  
*Abraham binds his Son*. I have known a stubborn  
Malefactor, quite unalarmed, when sentenced to the  
igno-

\* According to *Josephus*, *Isaac* was, when He submit-  
ted Himself to the Slaughter, about twenty-five Years  
old. Others think, his Age was thirty-three; which  
makes Him more exactly resemble his suffering LORD.  
Then his Father must be above a hundred and thirty  
Years old. Either Account will justify *Aspasio's* Suppo-  
sition.

ignominious Tree; not at all impressed, with the most awful Representations of eternal Judgment; yet, when a Person came to measure Him for his *Coffin*, the hardened Wretch was hard no longer. He started; turned pale; and trembled in every Joint. —Even such a Circumstance makes no Impression on *Abraham*; neither alters his Purpose, nor changes his Countenance. He measures his *Isaac*; measures those Limbs, which He had so frequently and so tenderly caressed; and if not for the *Coffin*, yet for immediate Slaughter.

Having bound Him—surprising Resolution!—bound Him for the Sword and for the Flame, He *lays Him upon the Altar on the Wood*. There, now, lies *Isaac*; the dear, the dutiful, the religious *Isaac*! *Abraham's* Joy; *Sarah's* Delight; the Heir of the Promises! There He lies, all meek and resigned; expecting, every Moment, the Stroke of Death to fall.—O Parents! Parents! Do not your Bowels yearn? Is not Humanity itself distressed at the Scene? Say, thou who art a Father, what thinkest Thou of *Abraham's* Obedience? Couldst Thou, to *such* a Son, have acted *such* a Part?

See! the Father, resolute to the very last, unsheaths the murdering Blade; makes bare the innocent Bosom; and marks the Place, where Life may find the speediest Exit. *His Heart is fixed*! He stretches his Arm; and now, even now is aiming the mortal Blow—When—rejoice O ye Worshipers of a gracious GOD! Break forth into Singing, Ye that are in Pain for the tried Parent! The LORD Almighty interposes, in this Article of  
extreme

extreme Need\*. The ANGEL of the Covenant speaks from Heaven, and with-holds the lifted Hand, in the very Act to strike. GOD, who only intended to *manifest* his Faith, and make it *honourable*, bids Him desist. GOD applauds his Obedience; substitutes another Sacrifice in *Isaac's* stead; renews his Covenant with the Father; and not only reprieves the Life of the Son, but promises Him a numerous and illustrious Issue. Promises to make Him the Progenitor of the MESSIAH, and thereby a public Blessing to all the Nations of the Earth.

Tell me now, *Theron*, was there ever such an astonishing Effort of Obedience? Such a perfect Prodigy of Resignation? Yet THIS HATH FAITH DONE†.—If you should ask, How was it possible for

\* Upon this most seasonable Interposition, the inspired Historian makes a very judicious and edifying Remark. Which seems to be greatly obscured, if not intirely spoiled, by our Translation; *In the Mount of the LORD it shall be seen*. I must confess, I have always been puzzled to find, not only a pertinent Sense, but any Sense at all, in these Words. Whereas, the Original is as clear in its Signification, as it is apposite to the Purpose.—בְּהַר יְהוָה יִרְאָה *In the Mount the LORD will be seen; or, In the Mount the LORD will provide.* q. d. "This memorable Event gave Rise to, at least is an eminent Exemplification of, that *proverbial* Expression, which is commonly used at this Day. In the Mount of Difficulty, or in the very Crisis of Need, when Matters seem to be irretrievable and desperate, then the LORD appears as a present Help. Man's Extremity is GOD's Opportunity." See Gen. xxii. 14.

† Heb. xi. 17. *By Faith, Abraham, when He was tried, offered up Isaac.*—The Faith, of which such glorious Things are



for *Abraham* to perform all this, in the Manner described? The Answer is obvious. Because, *Abraham* BELIEVED; or, in other Words, was fully persuaded, that the GOD, who had given Him this Son from the *barren* Womb, was able to raise Him again from the *smoking* \* *Ashes* —As the same GOD, who required this Sacrifice, had expressly declared, *In Isaac shall thy Seed be called*; the Patriarch doubted not, but the Promise would, in a Way known to infinite Wisdom, be punctually accomplished. Hence he made no Dispute, and felt no Reluctance. His

Faith

are spoken, to which such admirable Atchievements are ascribed, throughout this whole Chapter, was a Faith in "the Seed of the Woman," the promised MESSIAH. —Or, could it be demonstrated (which, I will venture to conclude, is impossible) that, in all these heroic Instances of Obedience, there was no believing Regard to CHRIST; no Apprehension of his unspeakable Love; no Application of his transcendent Merits; our Argument would not lose its Force, but strike with redoubled Energy. For, if a Belief in very inferior Manifestations of the divine Goodness, Faithfulness, and Power, wrought so efficaciously on those antient Worthies; how much more victoriously must the same Principle act, under far brighter Displays of all the supreme Perfections, in the Person of JESUS CHRIST! —I would only add, that so long as this Chapter remains in the Bible, it will furnish an unanswerable Confutation of those Objections, which suppose the Doctrine of Faith to have an unkindly Influence on religious or virtuous Practice. Against all such Cavils, it will stand fast for evermore as the Moon, and as the faithful Witness in Heaven.

\* He seems to have expected not only the certain, but the immediate Restoration of his slain Son. That he should be revived on the very Spot; before He left the Place; so as to accompany his Return. For, he says to his Servants, not *I*, but *We* will go, and worship, and return. נשובה Ver. 5.



Faith banished every uneasy Apprehension, and neither Fear nor Sorrow had place in his Breast. By Faith He was enabled, *speedily* and *cheerfully*, without so much as a parting Tear \*, to obey this unparalleled Precept.

And if all this, which would otherwise have been utterly impracticable, was wrought by Faith; You need

\* This Account, is so *very extraordinary*, that I shall not be surpris'd, if the Reader finds some Difficulty in giving his Assent to it. Especially, as He may have accustom'd Himself to form very different Conceptions of this remarkable Affair; and may possibly be confirm'd in a different Train of Ideas, by seeing a Representation of the Story in a celebrated *Print*. Where the Father appears, clasping his Son in a tender Embrace; bedewing Him with his Tears; and suffering as much through Grief, as the devoted Youth is going to suffer by the Knife.—But the *Engraver*, I apprehend, had not so attentively examined the Circumstances of the sacred Narrative, nor so carefully compar'd them with other Passages of Scripture, as a judicious and worthy *Friend* of mine. From whom I learnt to consider this wonderful Transaction in the above-represented View. And I must confess, the more I revolve it in my Mind, the more I am convinced of its Propriety.

I flatter myself, the Reader will be of the same Opinion, if he pleases to consult the Tenth Chapter of *Leviticus*. Where *Nadab* and *Abihu*, the Sons of *Aaron*, are devoured by Fire from before the LORD. Yet *Aaron* is not allowed to mourn, even at such a terrible and afflictive Visitation. And when, through the Frailty of human Nature, He could not wholly refrain, He durst not presume to eat of the Sin-offering. *Such Things*, says He, *have befallen me, if I had eaten of the Sin offering, should it have been accepted in the Sight of the LORD?*—Let me add, that we find not the least Indication of such agonizing Sorrow, nor indeed of any Sorrow at all, in the History as related by *Moses*. Neither could *Abraham* have been  
a proper

need not suspect, of *Weakness* and *Insufficiency*, so approved a Principle. Far from enervating, it will invigorate every good Disposition ; and instead of damping, will give Life to every religious Duty.—Cherish Faith, and You will of course cultivate Obedience. Water this Root, and the Branches of universal Godliness will assuredly partake the beneficial Effects ; will spread their Honours, and bring forth their Fruits.—Through the *Power* of Faith, the Saints have wrought Righteousness, in all its magnanimous and heroic Acts.—The *Doctrine* of Faith is called by St. Paul, *A Doctrine according to Godliness* \* ; exquisitely contrived to answer all the Ends, and secure every Interest of real Piety.—The *Grace* of Faith St. Jude styles, *Our most holy Faith* † ; intimating, that it is not only productive of Holiness, but that the most refined and exalted Holiness arises from this Stock.

Let Us then be diligent to exercise, and careful to increase, Faith in *JESUS CHRIST*. Let Us maintain the same zealous Solitude for this leading capital Grace, as the renowned *Epaminondas* expressed for his Shield. When that gallant General was, in an Engagement with the Enemy, struck to the Ground ; his Soldiers carried him off, breathless and fainting, to his Tent. The very Moment he opened his Eyes, and recovered the Use of Speech, he asked  
—not

a proper Type of the eternal FATHER, making his only begotten SON a Sacrifice for Sin, if He had not willingly offered up *Isaac*. Indeed to offer willingly, seems to have been absolutely necessary, in every acceptable Oblation, and every religious Service. See 2 Cor. ix. 7. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

\* 1 Tim. vi. 3.

† Jude 20.

—not whether his Wound was mortal? not whether his Troops were routed? But whether his *Shield* was safe?—May We be enabled, my dear Friend, to keep our Shield safe! May We be *strong*, be *steady*, be *lively* in Faith! Then, I doubt not, We shall give Glory to GOD, receive Comfort to Ourselves, and abound in the Works of the LORD.

Nothing can be more *pertinent* to my Purpose, than the Apostle's Prayer; That We *may know what is the Hope of our Calling in CHRIST JESUS, and what is the exceeding Greatness of his Power to themward who believe.* And nothing can be more *expressive* of the very Soul of

*Your affectionate*

ASPASIO.



## LETTER XII.

ASPASIO to THERON.

IT is very probable, while I am reading yours, You are perusing mine. But how unlike is my Friend to the Representation He receives! How unlike the satisfied, unsuspecting, chearful *Abraham*! Why this *dejected* Air in your Temper? Why those *pensive* Strokes in your Letter?—Let me anticipate your Reply, and make Answer to myself.—This Gloom, I trust, is a Sign of approaching Day. Just before the Morning Dawn, the nocturnal Darkness

is blackest. And just before the Appearance of the **SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**, the Penitent's Distress is frequently the deepest. I promise myself, the Hour is at Hand, which will *put off your Sackcloth, and gird You with Gladness.*

Another favourable Presage is, That You take the direct, and certain Way, to obtain substantial Comfort. The Righteousness of our **LORD JESUS CHRIST**, after which You inquire, about which You are solicitous, is a never-failing Spring of Consolation. Because it acquits from all Sin; secures from all Condemnation; and renders the Believer unblamable and unreprouable in the Sight of **GOD**. Therefore says the **HOLY GHOST**, *His Name is as Ointment poured forth* \* : even that divinely precious Name—by which He has been celebrated in the preceding Epistles; by which he is distinguished in the Scriptures of Truth; by which, I hope, He will be more and more revealed in my *Theron's* Mind—**THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.** The Discovery of Him under this most amiable and glorious Capacity, will indeed be like breaking open a Vial of the richest Unguents. Which not only fill the Room, and regale the Sense, with their delightful Fragrance; but refresh the Spirits, and *rejoice the very Heart.*—Might my Writing, or my Discourse, be as the *Alabaster-box* to contain, to convey, and present these reviving Odours; how highly should I think myself honoured, and how signally my Endeavours blessed!

You ask, “How this Righteousness of the Divine  
“**REDEEMER** becomes ours?”—It is a Que-  
stion

\* Cant. i. 3.



sion, which I receive with the utmost Pleasure; and, with equal Pleasure, shall attempt an Answer. Or rather, as the SPIRIT of our GOD prompted the first, may the same unerring GUIDE suggest the last!—This He has abundantly done by his Prophets and Apostles. So that I need only have recourse to their Writings, and collect some of the Hints, which lie treasured up in those Storehouses of Wisdom.

There we are often told of Union with CHRIST. Believers are said to be *in CHRIST*\*, and to be *one with CHRIST*†. — What is still higher, and implies a greater Degree of Nearness, They are *Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones*‡. — And, which denotes the most intimate Connection imaginable, *They that are joined to the LORD JESUS, are one Spirit* || with Him!—As these Expressions appear dark, and their Sense lies deep, it has pleased our all-condescending INSTRUCTOR to illustrate them, by a Variety of significant Types, and lively Similitudes. This Remark very opportunely reminds me of an Engagement, which, some Time ago, I undertook to execute, but have hitherto omitted—To make it evident, that the blessed Doctrine, for which We have been pleading, is deducible from several Scripture Images §. A short Descant upon some of the principal, will, I hope, at once discharge my former Obligation, and satisfy your present Inquiry.

This was shadowed forth by the costly, odoriferous, flowing Unguent, poured upon Aaron's Head;

VOL. III.

\* Col. i. 2.  
|| 1 Cor. vi. 17.

† Heb. ii. 11.

‡ Eph. v. 30.

§ See Vol. II. p. 315.

Head; which ran down upon his Beard, and descended to the Skirts \* of his Clothing. So, the Merits of our great HIGH-PRIEST are derived down to all the Faithful; even those of the meanest Station in Life, and the lowest Attainments in Religion.

Was it not typified by that instructive Vision, which the Prophet Zechariah saw? *I have looked, and behold! A Candlestick all of Gold, with a Bowl upon the Top of it, and his seven Lamps thereon, and seven Pipes to the seven Lamps, which were upon the Top thereof: And two Olive-trees by it, one upon the right Side of the Bowl, and the other upon the left Side thereof; which, through two golden Pipes, empty the golden Oil out of themselves †.* The Bowl and the Lamps were a proper Emblem of Believers: who are, by Nature, dry Vessels, and destitute of all Good; yet should shine as Lights, in the midst of a crooked and perverse Generation.—The Olive-trees, arrayed in Ver-  
 dure, and abounding with Sap; always emptying themselves, yet ever full; are a very just Representation of CHRIST, of his unchangeable Love, and his inexhaustible Grace.—The golden Pipes, through which the Olive-branches transmit their Oil,

\* Psal. cxxxiii. 2. What We render *Skirts*, is, in the Original, פִּימֹדוֹתַי *The Mouth*, or, as the Word is translated (*Job xxx. 18.*) *The Collar* of his Garments. It is hardly supposable, that the consecrating Oil flowed down to the very Bottom of the sacerdotal Vestments. But it might probably reach the upper Hem, or the Opening round the Neck; what the Greeks call *περιλαγχιδιον*—This Sense will sufficiently preserve the Gradation; The Head; the Beard; the Clothes. Which seem to denote CHRIST, his more advanced Saints, and Believers of a lower Class.

† Zech. iv. 2, 3, 12.

Oil, seem to be figurative of Faith, in its various and repeated Actings. By these Channels of Conveyance, the unspeakable Benefits of a REDEEMER are communicated to our Souls, and replenish those empty Basons.

Another Type the Apostle mentions. *The first Adam*, He says, *was a Figure of Him that was to come* \*. So eminent a Figure, and corresponding in so many Instances, that He styles our *LORD JESUS the last Adam* †. And why? Because, like the first, He was a *Covenant-Head* to his People, and transacted in their Stead. Insomuch, that what He did, and what He suffered, both are placed to their Account. Is *Adam's Sin* imputed to all his natural Offspring? So is *CHRIST's Righteousness* to all his spiritual Seed.—The Consequences of both, render the Doctrine more intelligible, and the Truth more undeniable. All Men are *judged, condemned, dead* ‡; doomed inevitably to the Death of the Body, and justly liable to the Death of the Soul, on the Score of *Adam's Transgression*. All Believers are *acquitted, justified, saved* ||; saved from the first Death, and made Heirs of the Resurrection; saved from the second Death, and intitled to Life eternal; by virtue of *CHRIST's Obedience*.

This Union with *CHRIST*, was not only prefigured by Types; but is displayed by a Variety of Similitudes, taken from the most familiar Occurrences of Life. By which it appears to be our Divine MASTER's Will, that We should live under the

O 2

habitual

\* Rom. v. 14. † 1 Cor. xv. 45. ‡ Rom. v. 15, 16. || Rom. v. 19, 21.

*habitual Belief* of this momentous Truth, and in the *constant Enjoyment* of this distinguished Privilege.—

You cannot visit a Friend, or view your Children; You cannot enter your Garden, discourse with your Spouse, or contemplate your own Body, without a Representation and a Remembrancer of this precious Blessing.

CHRIST says to his Disciples, *Henceforth I call you not Servants but Friends* \*. Friends are a second Self †. St. Paul speaking of Onesimus, uses this remarkable Phrase, *Receive Him, as myself*; and, which is still more emphatical, *Receive Him, that is mine own Bowels* ‡. Is not CHRIST's Friendship of the most tender and exalted Kind? Doubtless it must be equal, doubtless it must be superior, infinitely superior to Jonathan's.—Jonathan loved David as his own Soul. But CHRIST loved Sinners with a Love stronger than Death. They were dearer to Him than his own inestimable Life.—Jonathan exposed Himself to imminent Danger, in vindicating David's Conduct. JESUS surrendered himself to certain Death, in making Reconciliation for our Offences.—Jonathan interceded once and again with his Father in David's Behalf. CHRIST ever liveth, to plead his Blood, and make Intercession for Transgressors.—Jonathan stripped Himself of the Robe that was upon Him, and gave it to David, and his Garment, even to his Sword, and his Bow, and his Girdle ||. Our REDEEMER, without stripping Himself, has cloth-

\* John xv. 15.

† Horace calls Virgil, *Anima Dimidium meæ*.

‡ Philom. 12, 17.

|| 1 Sam. xviii. 4.



ed Us (such is the Prerogative of a Divine Person!) with the Robe of his Righteousness, and with the Garment of his Salvation. He has consigned over to Us all the Merit of his holy Life and propitiatory Death.

*CHRIST* stands related to his People, not as a Friend only, but as a *Parent*. He is called by a Prophet, **THE EVERLASTING FATHER** \*; and We are said, by an Apostle, to be *his Children* †. —Children look upon themselves, as interested in the Wealth of their Parents. They expect, and not without reasonable Ground, to reap Benefit from it, while the Parents live; and to become Possessors of it, when they die. Accordingly the Father says in the Gospel; *Sons, all that I have is thine* ‡. —Since the high and holy **EMMANUEL** vouchsafes to be our **FATHER**, can we suppose Him less generous than an earthly Parent? Or can We imagine that *his Children* shall have less to hope, than the Heirs of an earthly Progenitor? May We not, ought We not to regard all his communicable Goods, all the Benefits resulting from his meritorious Sufferings and perfect Obedience, as our Portion? — Especially, since He is the *Testator* || also; has bequeathed them to Us by Will; and, having submitted to Death, they become legally ours.

*I am the VINE*, says our **LORD**, *Ye are the Branches* §. They who believe, are ingrafted into **CHRIST**. —Take Notice of a Cyon. What are the Consequences of its *Ingrasture*? It is embodied

O 3

with

\* Isa. vi. 9.  
|| Heb. ix. 17.

† Heb. ii. 13.  
§ John xv. 5.

‡ Luke xv. 31.

with the Substance of the Tree, and partakes of its Fatness: The Sap, imbibed by the Root, circulates into it; gives it vegetable Life; fills it with Buds, decks it with Blossoms, and loads it with Fruit.—If then we are one with *CHRIST*, as much as the Branch is one with the Stock, it must follow, even upon the Principles of common Experience, that his *Wisdom* is ours, to enlighten Us; his *Righteousness* is ours, to justify Us; his *Spirit* is ours, to sanctify Us; his *Redemption* is ours, to make Us completely and eternally happy.

*CHRIST* is united to his People by a Tie, closer and dearer than the parental. They are not only his Children, but his *Spouse*. He is often called their Bridegroom, and is not ashamed to avow the tender Engagement: *I will betroth Thee to Me for ever: Yea, I will betroth Thee unto me in Righteousness, and in Judgment; and in Loving-kindness, and in Mercies: I will even betroth Thee unto Me in Faithfulness.* The condescending *GOD* multiplies, diversifies, accumulates his Words. And this, with admirable Propriety, as well as surpassing Goodness. The Honour is so high, and the Favour so great, We should hardly know how to believe it, and hardly venture to apply it. Lest therefore by a single Expression, it should not be sufficiently established, it stands ratified by repeated Asseverations, and with all the Energy of Language. So that, be the Grace ever so astonishing, We are assured, the Fact is equally certain; He that is our *MAKER*, is also our *HUSBAND*†.

Let

• Hof. ii. 19, 20.

† Isa. liv. 5.

Let Us consider what follows, upon such an Union. We may take for an Example, the Case of *Boaz* and *Ruth*. Soon as their Nuptials were solemnized, she that was poor, became rich: from a Gleaner in the Field, she commenced *Mistress* of the Harvest: and, from abiding by the Maidens, had a Seat at the Master's Table.—And if we are united to *CHRIST* by a Marriage Contract, the same Effects will take place. We that were poor, are rich in Him. We, who had Nothing, possess all Things in *CHRIST*. We that dwell in Dust, are made to sit together with our Divine HUSBAND in heavenly Places\*.

If you choose some modern Exemplification, what can be more pertinent, than the remarkable Instance of your Neighbour *Arietta*? She was lately left a Widow, by the dissolute and extravagant *Bellarion*. Her Circumstances miserably embarrassed, and the little Estate deeply mortgaged. Her Friends looked shy, and her Creditors became clamorous. Scarce a Day passed, but it made some new Discovery of Debts, contracted by the Deceased. So that the Affairs of the Survivor appeared with a more melancholy Aspect, and in a less retrievable Condition.—But, having won, first the Compassion, then the Affection, of the wealthy and illustrious *Philander*; how happily is the Face of Things altered! All her Debts devolve upon Him, and all his Dignity is derived to Her†. He stands responsible, for whatever

She  
 O 4  
 \* Eph. ii. 6. *Ubi Tu Cains, ibi Ego Caia* was the Roman Maxim.  
 † Agreeably to this Rule, which has obtained among all civilized

She *was*; and She is a Sharer, in whatever He *pos-*  
*sesses*. Though little less than ruined by her late  
 Husband, She is more than restored by her present;  
 and has Reason to rejoice in his Affluence, and to  
 glory in his Honours.—Have not We also Reason to  
 rejoice in our heavenly BRIDEGROOM? Since  
 a far more glorious Exchange subsists between Him  
 and his mystical Spouse. He has bore the *Curse*,  
 that We may inherit the *Blessing*. Sin was charged  
 on Him, that *Righteousness* might be imputed to Us.  
 In a Word; He has sustained all our Miseries, that  
 He might impart to Us all his Benefits.—Has the  
 Law any Demand\*? It must go to Him for Satisfac-  
 tion. Have We any Wants? We may look to  
 Him for a Supply. To HIM, *THERON*, in whom it  
 has pleased the FATHER, that all Fulness should  
 dwell†.

If any Thing can express an Union, more inti-  
 mate and inseparable than the conjugal, it is that of  
 the Members with the Head. And this Image is  
 used by the HOLY GHOST, to shadow forth  
 the Connection between CHRIST and the Faith-  
 ful. He is the Head over all Things, with respect to  
 Rule and Supremacy; but a Head of Union and In-  
 fluence, with respect to the Church‡.—The Head

and  
 lized Nations, the Scripture calls the Church by the Name  
 of her divine Husband. Compare Jer. xxiii. 5, 6. with  
 Jer. xxxiii. 15, 16.

The Demands of the Law are—Perfect Obedience;  
*Thou shalt love the LORD thy GOD with all thy Heart*  
 —To which, in case of Disobedience, is superadded  
 condign Punishment; Cursed is He that continueth not in  
 all Things.

† Col. i. 19.

‡ Eph. i. 22.



and the Members constitute one natural Body; *CHRIST* and his Church compose one mystical Body. What Kindness is done, what Injury is offered to the Members, the Heads regards them as done to itself. Accordingly, *CHRIST* says to the outrageous *Saul*, who made Havock of the Church; *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou ME\**? He declares, concerning those indigent *Christians*, to whose Necessities We administer Relief; *Inasmuch as Ye have done it unto them, Ye have done it unto ME†*.—The Animal Spirits formed in the Head, are formed for the Benefit of the whole Body, and designed for the Use of all the Members. So the Righteousness wrought by *JESUS CHRIST*, is wrought out for his whole mystical Body, and intended for the Advantage of all his People; to be the Cause of their Justification, and the Purchase of their Salvation.

Being then so nearly related, so closely united to the blessed *JESUS*, it is no Wonder, that Believers are now loved with the same fatherly Love, and will hereafter be Partakers of the same heavenly Glory.—What might We not expect from the Divine *REDEEMER*, if He vouchsafed to acknowledge but *one* of these endearing Names? Since He has engaged Himself to Us by *all* the Ties of Affinity and Affection; may We not promise Ourselves, and with the Assurance of Hope, every good Thing; *Even all the Fulness of GOD†* our Saviour?—Does not each of these tender Relations, subsisting  
between

\* Acts ix. 4.    † Matt. xxv. 40.    † Eph. iii. 19.

between *CHRIST* and his Saints, imply an intire Property in one another, and a mutual Participation of all that belongs to either?—*My Beloved is mine, and I am his*—I dare not say, is the *Posey* of the mystical Ring—but it is the undoubted *Effect* of this divine Union.

How pleasing, yet how amazing the Thought! Shall We, who say to Corruption, *Thou art my Father*; and to the Worm, *Thou art my Mother and my Sister*\*; shall We be permitted to say, concerning the HEAD of all Principality and Power, *We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh, and of his Bones*†?—What a Mercy might We esteem it, not to be confounded before a MAJESTY so exalted and sublime! What a Favour, to obtain the least propitious Regard from the KING immortal and invifible! What an Honour, to be admitted into his Family, and numbered among the Meanest of his Servants!—But to be his *adopted* Children; to be his *espoused* Bride; to be the *Members* of his sacred Body—To have HIM for our everlasting *Father*, HIM for the *Bridegroom* of our Souls, HIM for our heavenly *Head*; who is the MAKER of all Worlds, and the SOVEREIGN of all Creatures! What Words can duly celebrate, what Heart can sufficiently admire, the Condescension and the Love of our adorable *JESUS*? Or who can justly question the Fruits of such a Fellowship, and the Consequences of such an Union? Question them! No, the Fruits are infallibly sure, as the Privilege is inexpressibly great.

Let

\* Job xvii. 14.

† Eph. v. 30.

Let me once again introduce a great and venerable Witness of both these Truths. "*Laban* spake high, " when He said; *These Children are mine, and all* " *these Things thou seest are mine.* But how high and " glorious is that, which may be said of a justified " Person! All thou hearest of *CHRIST* is thine; " his Life is thine, his Death is thine, his Obedience, " Merit, Spirit, all thine\*."—Rich and important Words! Than which nothing can give Us a juster or fuller Explanation of the Apostle's Assertion, *We are Partakers of CHRIST* †.

When some foreign Ladies, of the first Quality, paid a Visit to *Leonidas's* Queen; the Talk turned upon their rich Clothes, their costly Jewels, and splendid Equipage. After they had severally displayed each her own Grandeur, they inquired after her Majesty's Finery. What *She* had to distinguish Her from the Vulgar?—She replied, *My illustrious Husband* ‡. What else? *My illustrious Husband*.—And as often as They repeated the same Question, She returned the same Answer.—Could this Queen speak in such admiring, rejoicing, self-gratulating Terms of her royal Consort? And shall not vile Sinners look upon their REDEEMER—that all-glorious, yet all-condescending Bridegroom; who is full of Grace and Truth, full of Merit and Righteousness—shall not they *much more* look upon HIM as their

\* See *Dr. LIGHTFOOT's Works*, Vol. II. p 1077.

† Heb. iii. 14.

‡ The amiable and heroic *Panthea* expresses Herself in much the same Manner, concerning her gallant Husband *Abradates*; *Εὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν γυναικὸς καὶ τοῦ σώματος καὶ τῆς ψυχῆς.* XENOPH. *Cyropæd.* Lib. VI.

their Honour and their Joy; the Object of their Dependence, and the Cause of their Boasting?

I should find it difficult to refrain from the farther Prosecution of so engaging a Topic, did I not propose to wait upon my *Theron* very speedily. Then I shall have an Opportunity of pouring into his Bosom all the Fulness of my Heart, with regard to this delightful Subject.—In the mean time, let me exhort my dear Friend to be of good Comfort. *Heaviness may endure for a Night, but Joy cometh in the Morning* \*. This Sorrow of which You complain, may be the Seed of spiritual and eternal Consolation.

While I am writing, there appears full in my View, one of the finest *Rainbows*, I ever beheld. *It compasseth the Heavens with a glorious Circle*; so glorious, that it is no Disparagement of the Almighty CREATOR, to say, *the Hands of the MOST HIGH have bended it* †.—On what Foundation, would I ask, is that stately and beautiful Arch raised? From what Source, do all its radiant and lovely Colours spring? It is raised on a *gloomy Assemblage* of Vapours; and all its rich Tinctures spring from a *louring Cloud*.—Thus does the blessed G O D, on a Conviction of Guilt and a Sense of Ruin, spread Faith, paint Holiness, and diffuse Gladness. May all these, ere long, arise in my *Theron's* Breast! And each be—*bright*, as that resplendent Bow—*lasting*, as the Sun that creates it!

In the mean time, it is the ardent Wish of my Soul, and shall be my frequent Prayer to GOD, *That both our Hearts may be comforted, being knit together in Love, unto all Riches of the full Assurance of* Under-

\* Psal. xxx. 5.

† Eccclus. xliii. 12.



*Understanding* \*, in this great Mystery of Godliness.  
—What Vigour of Expression, what Exuberance of  
Ideas, and, above all, what distinguished Privileges  
are Here!—*Assurance—Full Assurance—Riches* of the  
full Assurance—*All Riches* of the full Assurance of  
Understanding—in reference to our Union with  
*CHRIST*, and its unutterably precious Effects!—  
Can the Orator express more? Can the Sinner de-  
sire more? Can the Saint, I had almost said, can  
the Archangel enjoy more?—May this be the Portion  
of my dear *Theron*, and of

*His ever faithful*

ASPASIO.

\* Col. ii. 1.





## DIALOGUE XV.



SPASIO had taken Leave of his Friend *Camillus*, and was come to revisit *Theron*. Whose Thoughts seemed to be in a State of much Fluctuation, and no small Anxiety. Hoping, that some proper Conversation on the *Grace* and *Privileges* of the everlasting Gospel, might compose and comfort his Mind. Might, while his Heart was softened by humbling Convictions, fix the Stamp of genuine Christianity; and deliver his whole Soul into the Mould \* of evangelical Religion.

*When Sorrow wounds the Breast, as Ploughs the Glebe,  
And Hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning Show'r,  
Her Seed celestial then glad Wisdom sows:  
Her golden Harvests triumph in the Soil †.*

He

\* *Deliver into the Mould*—This is the literal Translation, and exact Sense of St. Paul's Phrase; Εἰς τὴν σκευὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ διδάσκων. Rom. vi. 17.—Which, as it contains a beautiful Allusion, conveys also a very instructive Admonition. Intimating, that our Minds, all pliant and ductile, should be conformed to the refined Precepts of the Gospel, as liquid Metals take the Figure of some elegant Mould, into which they are cast.

† Night-Thoughts.

He arrived pretty late in the Evening: and, being somewhat weary with the Journey, soon withdrew to his Repose.—The next Morning, as *Theron* walked abroad, to taste the cool Delights of the Dawn; He was agreeably surpris'd, by meeting *Aspasio*.

*Ther.* So soon awake, my worthy Friend! And after so much Fatigue on the preceding Day!—I had not the least Expectation of your Company, till Breakfast. Then indeed I promised myself a double Regale—The Refreshments exhibited on the Table; and those *wholesome Words of our LORD JESUS CHRIST\**, which, more precious than Manna, drop—

*Asp.* How, *Theron*!—Have you also learnt those soothing Arts, which polish the Speech, to deprave our Sentiments? Could I have suspected the enchanting Wiles of *Flattery*, from my sincere, my tried, my bosom Friend?

*Ther.* Your Friend is still sincere, and his Words are very remote from Flattery.—How welcome to the wind-bound *Mariner*, weary with Expectation, and sick with Disappointments, is the Visit of a propitious Gale! How welcome to the *Fields*, parched with Drought, and gasping for Moisture, are copious Showers of Rain! How acceptable to the *Israelites*, traveling through the inhospitable Desert, and pining away for want of the Fruits of the Earth, was the miraculous Supply of heavenly Bread!—Yet, neither propitious Gales to the wind-bound *Mariner*, nor copious Showers to the thirsty Soil, nor heavenly Bread to the famished *Israelites*, could be more welcome,

\* 1 Tim. vi. 3.

come, than your late Conversation, and later Correspondence, to my anxious Soul.

*Asp.* Why I thought you looked upon *my* Notions as chimerical. Is *Theron* also become credulous? Like one of Us weak-headed Believers!—Has *He* quitted the Strong-holds of Reason? Is *He* vanquished by the Sling-stone of Faith? Or can *He* submit to this strange Method of Salvation, by embracing the Righteousness, and relying on the Obedience of Another?

*Ther.* I find, my Reason was a feeble Guide; or I myself not faithful to its genuine Dictates. I was blinded with Prejudice. I was intoxicated with Pride. A vain Conceit of my moral Powers betrayed me, as I fear it has betrayed many, into a Contempt of the evangelical Righteousness.—I held, what I thought an Honour to human Nature. I now retract my Opinion. I now perceive, that, as my *natural Light* could not discover the Way, neither can my *personal Obedience* put me in Possession, of Life and Salvation. My true Glory, and real Happiness, I would henceforth derive from the blessed *JESUS*.—No more Banter, *Aspasio*:—Have done:—I am serious, and very much in earnest. So much in earnest, that if all my Acquaintance of the *Pharisaical* Turn, or if all my Brothers of the Smile, should rally me on the Subject; I would frankly acknowledge my Error, and as freely sign my Recantation.

*Asp.* My dear *Theron*, I applaud your Resolution. You have no more Cause to be ashamed of such a Practice, than *Philip* had to be ashamed of the Imperfection in his Limbs. When, being observed to go  
lame



lame, with a Wound received in Battle, he had this Consolation suggested by one of his Courtiers: "Never blush, my royal Sir, for a Defect, which puts You in mind of your *Valour*, every Step You take."—To sacrifice our Prejudices, in the Search of Truth, is no less honourable, than to be marked with a Scar, in the Defence of our Country.

I beg Pardon for my Pleasantry. Since you are so very serious, a gay Air was quite unseasonable.—You cannot often complain, that I am guilty of this Fault. Nor can You easily imagine, the Satisfaction I shall enjoy; if, either my Letters, or my Discourse, have administered any *Advantage* to my Friend. I shall note it down, among the distinguished Blessings of my Life; and have an additional Obligation, to love the beneficent AUTHOR of all Good.

But, as I cannot be a Furtherer of your Happiness, without the greatest Delight; so I cannot be a Witness of your Solitude, without a painful Regret. You must therefore permit me to ask the Cause of that unusual *Vehemence*, which I observe in your Speech; and of that deep *Concern*, which I read in your Countenance.

*Ther.* I have been considering very attentively, What is the *present* State, and what is likely to be the *final* Condition of my Soul.

---

*My Hopes and Fears*

*Start up alarm'd; and o'er Life's narrow Verge*

*Look down—on what? A fathomless Abyss,*

*A vast Eternity!*

My Sins, at the same Time, like an armed Host, are set in dreadful Array, and surround me on every

Side.—*Justice*, like an injured and incensed Foe, unsheaths the Sword, and makes a loud Demand for Vengeance.—No Righteousness of *my own* presents itself, to which I may fly for Refuge.—The Method of Salvation, in which I formerly confided, is a Bridge broken down; and leaves me, without any Possibility of Escape, abandoned to the approaching Enemy.

To a Person in such deplorable Circumstances, how reviving, how delightful, is the very Thought of being interested in the great REDEEMER's Righteousness!—I don't wonder now at a Saying of *Luther's*; which I have sometimes exploded, as strangely extravagant: "That, upon the Discovery of this glorious Righteousness, the Gates of Paradise seemed to fly open before Him, and the Dawn of Heaven was all in View."

Talking in this Manner, they came to an elevated Terrace. Which, about an Hour before, had been mowed by the Scythe, and omitted all the Freshness of new-mown Herbage.—On one Side, a fine Campaign Country stretched its wide Dimensions.—On the other, a Flower-Garden exhibited the last Ornaments of the Year.—Here, You might still see the tuted Vermilion, and the full-blown Ivory, glittering through Spangles of liquid Cryстал.—There, You might trace the Footsteps of the early Cattle, by many a recent Print on the dewy Lawn.—On the Walls and Espaliers, Autumn had spread her Stores; and was beginning to beautify their Rinds with many a ruddy Streak, or to breathe over their glossy Skins her delicate and inimitable Bloom.

*Asp.* See, said *Aspasio*, the Wisdom and Benignity, which, in amiable and inseparable Conjunction, display themselves through the whole Oeconomy of the Universe! *GOD* has made every Thing beautiful in his Time\*; every Thing serviceable in its Place. A little while ago, the flowery Meads delighted our Eyes, and the melodious Birds charmed our Ears; now, the tasteful Fruits are preparing their Dainties, and presenting Us with a Collation, to regale our Palate.—The whole Earth, and all the Seasons, are rich with our CREATOR's Goodness. Yes, the whole Earth, and all that replenishes it, all that surrounds it, are full of his Presence. HE it is, who  
*Warms in the Sun, refreshes in the Breeze,*  
*Glowes in the Stars, and blossoms in the Trees;*  
*Lives through all Life, extends through all Extent,*  
*Spreads undivided, operates unspent†.*

An habitual Belief of this Truth, gives Nature her loveliest Aspect, and lends her the most consummate Power to please. The Breath of Violets, and the Blush of Roses; the Music of the Woods, and the Meanders of the Stream; the aspiring Hill, the extended Plain, and all the Decorations of the Landscape; then appear in their highest Attractives; then touch the Soul with the most refined Satisfaction; when *GOD* is seen—when *GOD* is heard—and *GOD* enjoyed in all — — — — —  
 —Is *Theron* lost in Thought, and deprived of Speech? Is HE alone silent, while all Things speak their MAKER's Praise?—Does Faith throw a Shade

P 2

over

\* Ecclef. iii. 11.

† *POPE's Est. Epist.*



over the Works of Creation? Does it not heighten their Beauties, and inliven their Graces?—The religious is the only true Philosopher; and the Pleasures of Imagination never acquire their proper Relish, till they are ripened by the Exercise of Devotion. With this View then, since my Friend forbears, let me attempt to speak: not to increase his Knowledge, but to cherish Faith, and cultivate Devotion in Us both.

The spacious Canopy\* over our Heads, is painted with Blue; and the ample Carpet under our Feet, is tinged with Green. These Colours, by their soft and cheering Qualities, yield a perpetual Refreshment to the Eye†. Whereas, had the Face of Nature glistered with White, or glowed with Scarlet; such ardent and dazzling Hues would, instead of exhilarating, have fatigued the Sight.—Besides; as the several brighter Colours are interspersed, and form the Pictures in this magnificent Piece; the Green and the Blue constitute an admirable Ground, which

shews

• What *Aspasio* calls the Canopy, *Isaiah* describes by כִּתָּב. Which We translate as a Curtain; but the exact Signification is, *Sicut tenue, vel tenuissimum quid*; Like some finely attenuated Expanse. Not like the Curtains or the Covering of the Tabernacle, which were Goats Hair and Badgers Skins, shaggy and coarse. But like some very fine Membrane, smooth and elegant, nicely polished and inimitably delicate. Than which Comparison nothing can more perfectly correspond with the Aspect of the Sky. *Isa. xl. 22.*

† Gay Green,  
Thou smiling Nature's universal Robe!  
United Light and Shade! Where the Sight dwells,  
With growing Strength, and ever-new Delight.

THOMSON'S Spring.



shews them all, in their highest Lustre, and to the utmost Advantage \*.

Had the *Air* been considerably *grosser*, it would have dimmed the Rays of the Sun, and darkened the cheerful Day. Our Lungs had been clogged in their vital Functions: Men had been suffocated, without the strangling Noose; or drowned, without the overwhelming Flood.—Was it several Degrees more *subtle*, Birds would not be able to wing their Way through the Firmament; nor could the Clouds be sustained, in so attenuated an Atmosphere. It would elude the Organs of Respiration: We should gasp for Breath, with as much Difficulty; and with as little Success, as Fishes out of their native Element.

The *Ground* also is wrought into the most proper Temperature. Was it of a *firmer* Consistence, it would be impenetrable to the Plough, and unmanageable by the Spade.—Was it of a *laxer* Composition, it would be incapable of supporting its own Furniture. The light Mold would be swept away by whirling Winds; or the oozy Glebe soaked into Sloughs by the descending Rains.—Because, every Situation suits not every Plant; but that which is a Nurse to one, often proves a Step-mother to others; therefore, the Qualities of the Earth are so abundantly

P 3  
\* If the Reader has Patience, to go through the following Essay, He will find it, in the Issue, not altogether foreign to the main Subject.—If he pleases to consider it, as a kind of *practical Comment*, on that lovely Celebration of providential Goodness, *His tender Mercies are over all his Works*—This may possibly alleviate the Toil of perusing, and reconcile Him to the Length of the Descant.

dantly diversified, as properly to accommodate every Species of Vegetation. We have a Variety of intermediate Soils, from the *loose* disjointed Sand, to the *stiff* cohesive Clay; from the rough Projections of the *craggy* Cliff, to the softly swelling Bed of the *smooth* Parterre.

The *Sea* carries equal Evidences of a most wise and gracious Ordination.—Was it *larger*, We should want Land for the Purposes of Pasturage, and the Operations of Husbandry. We should be destitute of sufficient Room for Mines and Forests; our subterranean Warehouses, and our aerial Timber-Yards.—Was it *smaller*, it would not be capable of recruiting the Sky, with a proper Quantity of vaporous Exhalations; nor of supplying the Earth with the necessary Quota of fructifying Showers.

Do we not discern very apparent Strokes of Skill, and the most pregnant Proofs of Goodness, in each individual Object? In the various *Tenants* of the Globe, and the several *Appurtenances* of this great Dwelling?—It is needless to expatiate upon the more eminent and conspicuous Beauties; all that *shines* in the Heavens, and all that *smiles* on the Earth. These speak to every Ear, these shew to every Eye, the adorable Munificence of their MAKER.—It is needless to launch into the Praises of the Valleys, delicately clothed with Herbage; or of the Fields, richly replenished with Corn. Even the *ragged* Rocks, which frown over the Flood; the *caverned* Quarries, which yawn amidst the Land; together with the Mountains, those *shapeless* and enormous Protuberances, which seem to load the Ground, and incumber the

the Skies ; even these contribute their Share, to increase the general Pleasure, and augment the general Usefulness. They variegate the Prospect ; raise an agreeable Horror in the Beholder ; and inspire his Breast with a religious Awe. They add new Charms to the wide Level of our Plains ; and shelter, like a Screen, the warm Lap of our Vales.

We are delighted with the solemn Gloom, and magnificent Aspect, of the Forest. One, who saw the Cedars of *Lebanon*, was transported with Admiration, at their ample Trunks, and towering Heads ; their diffusive Spread, and verdant Grandeur. Compared with which, the stately Elm is but a Reed ; and the branching Oak, a mere Shrub.—Was our Sight qualified for the Search, We should discover a *Symmetry* and a *Dignity*, altogether as perfect, and far more wonderful in those Groves of *Moss* \*, which adhere to the rude Stone. We should contemplate, with greater Surprise, if not with greater Rapture, those diminutive Plantations ; which strike their hasty Roots in the mouldy Confection,

P 4

or

\* See, for a Proof of this Remark, the Explanation of the *tenth Plate*, in that very curious, very entertaining, and no less instructive Piece, intitled *Micrographia Restaurata*.—Where our Author compares the Size of this little Vegetable, with the Dimensions of those vast Trees, which grow in the vigorous Climates of *Guinea* and *Brazil*. The Trunks of which are, according to the Report of Travelers, twenty Feet in Diameter. Whereas, the Body of this minute Plant, measures no more than the sixtieth Part of an Inch. So that, upon a Calculation, the Thickness of the former exceeds that of the latter, 2,985,984 Millions of Times.—So prodigiously various are the Works of the CREATOR.



or wave their curious Umbrage over the perished Pickle \*.

Who is not charmed with the Vine, and its generous warming Juices? With the Melon, and its delicious cooling Pulp? Yet, were all our Trees to produce Fruits of such exalted Qualities, or of such an agreeable Relish, what would become of the *Birds*! How small a Scantling of such choice Delicacies, would voracious Man resign to their Enjoyment?—That Provision may be made for the meanest *Vagrant* of the Air, as well as for the most renowned Sovereign of a Nation; there is, in all Places, a large Growth of Shrubs, covered annually with a Harvest of coarse and hardy Berries. So *coarse* in their Taste, that they are unworthy of the Acceptance of Man: so *hardy* in their Make, that they endure the extremest Severities of the Weather; and furnish the feathered Tribe with a standing Repast, amidst all the Desolations of Winter.

The Fir, with her silver Bark, and shapely Cone; the Beech †, with her quivering Leaves and embowering

\* That whitish kind of Down, which shags the putrefying Pickle; which incrusts the Surface of some corrupted Liquors; and constitutes what we call *Mouldiness*; is really a Cluster of little Plants. Each has a Root and a Stalk; Each spreads its Branches, and produces Seed in Abundance.

*Radicesque suas habet, exilemque Coronam,  
Frondesque, Fructumque gerit, velut ardua Quercus.*

† The Fir, the Beech, and such like Trees, are called in Hebrew, עֲרֵבָה *Isa. vii. 19.* Which Word is rendered, but I think very improperly, *Bushes*. It rather signifies



ing Shade; are stately Decorations of our rural Seats. But, if there were no intangling *Thickets*, no prickly *Thorns*, where would the Farmer procure Fences, so closely wattled, or so strongly armed \*? How could He guard the Scene of his Labours, or secure his vegetable Wealth, from the Flocks and the Herds? Those roving Plunderers, which accede to no Treaty, but that of *forcible* Restraint; submit to no Laws, but those of the *coercive* Kind.

Most People are fond of the Purslane's fleshy Leaves, and the ramified Fatness of the Brocoli: the Potato's mealy Orbs, and the Lentile's succulent Pods. We spare no Toil, We grudge no Expence, to have them flourish in our Gardens, and served up at our Tables.—But there are innumerable Herbs, which

signifies the *grand* and most *admired* Plants. It is intended as a Contrast to the coarse and despicable Thorns, mentioned in the preceding Clause. And both taken together express all Sorts of Trees, from the towering Cedar to the groveling Shrub.

\* Something to this Purpose is hinted in the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, by *יראת שמיר ושיט* *Terriculamentum Sentium & Veprium*: The Terror of Thorns and Briars. Meaning those sharp and ragged Mounds, with which Vineyards, Corn-fields, and other cultivated Spots, were usually inclosed. Which *deterred* the most adventurous Cattle from forcing, or attempting to force, a Passage.—The Words are somewhat obscure, and have been greatly misunderstood. But, thus interpreted, they afford an easy Sense, and perfectly coincide with the Context. Implying, “That Places, formerly fenced about with Abundance of Care, should lie open, and exposed to every wandering Foot. That Tillage should be discontinued; and the whole Country degenerate into a confused, disorderly Waste; without either the Distributions of Property, or the Improvements of Industry.” *Isa.* vii. 25. Vid. *VITRING. in loc.*

which pass under the contemptible Character of *Weeds*; and yet are altogether as desirable to many Classes of Creatures, as these culinary Gifts to Mankind. Who shall be at the Pains to plant, to water, to cultivate, such despicable Productions? Man would rather *extirpate*, than *propagate*, these Incumbrances of his Acres. Therefore Providence vouchsafes to be their Gardener. Providence has wrought off their Seeds into such a Lightness of Substance, that they are carried abroad with the Undulations of the Air. Or, if too heavy to be wafted by the Breeze, they are fastened to Wings of Down, which facilitate their Flight. Or else, are inclosed in a springy Case; which, forcibly bursting, shoots and spreads them on every Side.—By some such means, the reproducing Principle is disseminated; the universal Granary is filled; and the universal Board furnished. The buzzing Insect, and the creeping Worm, have each his *Bill of Fare*. Each enjoys a never-failing Treat, equivalent to our finest Venison, or to the “Fat of Kidneys of Wheat\*.”

As

\* *The Fat of Kidneys of Wheat*, Deut. xxxii. 14. A Sentence, rich with Elegance! Such as would have shone in *Pindar*, or been admired by *Longinus*. Yet, I believe, its principal Beauty consists, in an Allusion to a remarkable *Jewish* Rite. In every Sacrifice, the Fat of the Kidneys was, as the most delicious Part of the Victim, set apart for GOD, and consumed on his Altar. Here, even the common People were treated like the DEITY. They lay under no Restraint, either from the divine Prohibition, or the Scarcity of the Grain. But were copiously supplied, and freely regaled themselves with the *choicest finest* Part of this first and best of Vegetables.

As the Seeds of some Plants are most artfully scattered abroad, when ripe; the Seeds of others are most carefully *guarded*, till they come to Maturity; and, by both Contrivances, every Species is not barely preserved, but in a manner eternized.—Some are lodged in the Center of a large *Pulp*; which is, at once, their Defence, and their Nourishment. This We find exemplified in the tasteful Apple, and the juicy Pear.—Some, besides the surrounding Pulp, are inclosed in a thick *Shell*, hard and impenetrable as Stone. We cannot pluck and eat one of those downy Peaches, or incrimsoned Nectarines, which so beautifully emboss the Wall, without finding a Proof of this Precaution.—Cast your Eye upon the Walnuts, which stud the Branches of that spreading Tree. Before these are gathered, the Increase of the Cold, and the Emptiness of the Gardens, will sharpen the Appetite of the Birds. To secure the fine Kernel from the Depredations of their busy assailing Bills, it is fortified with a strong *Inclosure* of Wood, and with the Addition of a disgusting bitter *Rind*.

If *Grafs* was as scarce as the *Guernsey-Lily*; or as difficultly raised as the delicate *Tuberoſe*; how certainly, and how speedily, must many Millions of Quadrupeds perish with Famine! Since all the Cattle owe their chief Subsistence to this Vegetable, by a singular Beneficence in the Divine Oeconomy, it waiteth not, like the Corn-field and the Garden-bed, for the annual Labours of *Man* \*. When once sown, though ever so frequently cropped, it revives with

\* Mic. v. 7.

with the returning Season, and flourishes in a kind of perennial Verdure. It covers our Meadows; diffuses itself over the Plains; springs up in every Glade of the Forest; and spreads a Side-board in the most sequestered Nook.

Since the Nutriment of Vegetables themselves, lies hid under the Soil, or floats up and down in the Air: *beneath*, they plunge their Roots \* into the Ground, and disperse every Way their fibrous Suckers, to explore the latent, and attract the proper Nourishment: *above*, they expand a Multitude of Leaves \*, which, like so many open Mouths, catch the Rains as they fall; imbibe the Dews as they distil; and transmit them, through their nice Orifices, to the Heart of the Plant, or the Lobes of the Fruit.

I have touched upon the *insensible* Creation; and pointed out the Care of a condescending Providence, exercised over these lowest Formations of Nature.— The *animal* World, *Theron*, falls to your Share. It is yours to descant upon those higher Orders of Existence; and shew Us the Goodness of GOD, extending its indulgent Regards to them and their Interests; as tenderly, as officiously, as a Hen spreadeth her Wings † over her infant Brood.

*Ther.* The Subject is in good Hands. Let *Part the second* be of the same Strain with *Part the first*, and

\* *Job* most beautifully alludes to these two Sources of vegetable Fertility; *My Root was spread out by the Waters, and the Dew lay all Night upon my Branch.* Job xxix. 19.

† This seems to be the Image used by the *Psalmist*, Psal. cxlv. 9. And a most amiable Image, as well as a most picturesque Representation, it is.



and there will be no Occasion to wish for a new Speaker. As to myself I have very little Inclination to talk. But I have an Ear open and attentive to your Discourse.

*Asp.* You put me in mind of the Philosopher, who presumed to read a Lecture on the Art of War, in the Presence of *Hannibal*. But his Impertinence was voluntary, mine is constrained.—Since You injoin me this Office, let Us pass from the vegetable, to the animal World. Here, We shall find no Tribe, no Individual neglected. The superior Classes want no Demonstration of their excellent Accomplishments. At the first Glimpse, they challenge our Approbation; they command our Applause. Even the *more ignoble* Forms of animated Existence, are most wisely circumstanced, and most liberally accommodated.

They all generate in that particular Season, which is sure to supply them with a Stock of Provision, sufficient both for themselves, and their increasing Families.—The Sheep yearn, when there is a Profusion of *nutrimental Herbage* on the Soil, to fill their Udders, and create Milk for their Lambs.—The Birds lay their Eggs, and hatch their Young, when *Myriads* of new-born, tender Insects swarm on every Side. So that the Caterer, whether it be the male or female Parent, needs only to alight on the Ground, or make a little Excursion into the Air; and they find a Feast ready dress'd, and all at free Cost, for the clamant Mouths at home.

Their Love to their Offspring, while they continue in a helpless State, is *invincibly* strong. Whereas, the very Moment they are able to shift for themselves;

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selves; when the parental Affection would be attended with much Solitude, and productive of no Advantage; it *vanishes*, as though it had never been.

—The Hen which marches at the Head of her little Brood, would fly in the Eyes of a Mastiff, or even encounter a Lion, in their Defence. Yet, within a few Weeks, she abandons her Chickens to the wide World, and not so much as knows them any more.

If the GOD of *Israel* inspired *Bezaleel* and *Aholiab* with *Wisdom*, and *Understanding*, and *Knowledge in all Manner of Workmanship* \*: the GOD of Nature has instructed the wild and warbling Inhabitants of the Bough.—The *Skill*, with which they erect their Houses, and adjust their Apartments, is inimitable. The *Caution*, with which they secrete their Abodes from the searching Eye, or intruding Foot, is admirable. No General, though fruitful in Expedients, could plan a more artful Concealment. No Architect, with his Rule and Line, could build so commodious a Lodgment.—Give the most celebrated Artificer the same Materials, which these weak and unexperienced Creatures use. Let a *Jones*, or a *De Moivre*, have only some rude Straws or ugly Sticks; a few Bits of Dirt, or Scraps of Hair; a sorry Lock of Wool, or a coarse Sprig of Moss; and what Works, fair with Delicacy, or fit for Service, could they produce?

We extol the Commander, who knows how to take Advantage of the Ground: who can make the Sun and Wind fight for Him, as well as his Troops: and, by every Circumstance, embarrasses the Forces of

\* Exod. xxxi. 3.

of the Enemy, but expedites the Action, and advances the Success of his own, Does not this Praise belong to our *feathery Leaders*? Who pitch their Tent, or (if You please) fix their pensile Camp, on the dangerous Branches, that wave aloft in the Air, or dance over the Eddies of the Stream. By which judicious Disposition, the vernal Gales rock their Cradle, and the murmuring Waters lull their Young: while both concur to terrify the Shepherd, and keep the School-Boy at a trembling Distance.—Some hide their little Household from View, amidst the Shelter of intangled Furze. Others remove it from Reach, in the Center of a thorny Thicket. And, by one Stratagem or another, they are generally as *secure* and *unmolested*, in their feeble Habitations; as the Foxes, which intrench themselves deep in the Earth; or as the Conies, which retire to the Rock for their \* Citadel.

If the *Swan* has large sweeping Wings, and a copious Stock of Feathers, to spread over her callow Brood; the *Wren* makes up by Contrivance, what is deficient in her Bulk.—Small as she is, she intends † to bring forth, and will be obliged to nurse

up,

\* Prov. xxx. 26.

† *Assafio* has ventured to say, *She intends*—And one is almost tempted to think, from the Preparation which the little Creature makes, that She had really set down, and counted the Cost, and concerted her Scheme. As though she had deliberated with Herself—"I shall lay, not a Couple of Eggs, but near a Score. From these I am to produce a House full of Young. But how shall I have Warmth (unless Art supply, what Nature has denied) sufficient to hatch the Embrios, or cherish the Infants?"—The Truth, I believe, is; That in all her



up, a very numerous Issue. Therefore, with the correctest Judgment She designs, and with indefatigable Assiduity finishes, a Nest proper for her Purpose. It is a neat *Rotund*; lengthened into an *Oval*; bottomed and vaulted with a regular *Concave*. To preserve it from Rain, it has several Coatings of Moss: to defend it from Cold, it has but one Window, and only a single Door: to render it both elegant and comfortable, it has *Carpets* and *Hangings* of the finest softest Down.—By the Help of this curious Mansion, our little Lady becomes the Mother of Multitudes. The vivifying Heat of her Body is, during the Time of Incubation, exceedingly augmented. Her House is like an Oven, and greatly assists in hatching her Young. Which no sooner burst the Shell, than they find themselves screened from the Annoyance of the Weather; and most agreeably reposed, amidst the Ornaments of a Palace, and the Warmth of a Bagnio.

Perhaps, We have been accustomed to look upon the Insects, as so many *rude* Scraps of Creation, and to rank them amongst the *Refuse* of Things. Whereas, if We examine them, without Prejudice, and with a little Attention, they will appear some of the most polished Pieces of divine Workmanship.—Many of them are decked with a Profusion of Finery.

Their her seeming Foresight, and circumspect Behaviour, She acts, She knows not what. Only She acts, what eternal Wisdom knows to be necessary, and what all-condescending Goodness prompts her to perform.



# DIALOGUE XV. 241

Their *Eyes* are an Assemblage \* of Microscopes; whose Mechanism is inconceivably nice, and finished in the highest Perfection. Their *Dress* has all the Variety and Lustre of Colours: it is set with an Arrangement of the most brilliant Gems; and bordered with Fringes richer far than the most costly Silks. Their *Wings* are the finest Expansions imaginable: Cambric is mere Canvass, and Lawn is coarse as Sack-cloth, compared with those inimitable Webs. The *Cases*, which inclose their Wings, glitter with the most glossy Varnish; are scooped into ornamental Flutings; are studded with radiant Spots; or pinked with elegant Holes.—Not any among them but are equiped with Weapons, or endued with Dexterity, which qualify them to seize their Prey; or escape their Foe; to dispatch the Business of their respective Station, and enjoy the Pleasures of their particular Condition:

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Q.

Now

\* The *common Fly*, for instance. Who is surrounded with a Multitude of Dangers, and has neither Strength to resist her Enemies, nor a Place of Retreat to secure Herself. For which Reason, She had need to be very vigilant, and always upon her Guard. Yet her Head is so fixed, that it is incapable of turning, in order to observe what passes, either behind or around her.—Providence therefore, surprisngly wise in its Contrivances, and equally bountiful in its Gifts, has furnished her, not barely with a *Retinuz*, but with more than a *Legion* of Eyes. Infomuch, that a single Fly is supposed to be Mistress of no less than eight thousand. Every one of which is lined with a distinct optic Nerve.—By means of this costly and amazing Apparatus, the little Creature sees on every Side, with the utmost Ease and with instantaneous Speed; even without any Motion of the Eye, or any Flexion of the Neck.

## 242 DIALOGUE XV.

Now I am in a talking Humour, give me leave to celebrate the Endowments, and assert the Honours of my puny Clients. Yet, not so much to support *their* Credit, as to magnify their *all-gracious* CREATOR.—What? If the Elephant is distinguished by a huge *Proboscis*? His meanest Relations of the reptile Line, are furnished with curious *Antennæ*; remarkable, if not for their enormous Magnitude, yet for their ready Flexibility, and acute Sensation. By which they explore their Way, even in the darkest Road: they discover and avoid, whatever might defile their neat Apparel, or endanger their tender Lives.

Every one admires that majestic Creature the *Horse*; his graceful Head, and ample Chest; his arching Neck, and flowing Mane; his cleanly turned Limbs, and finely adjusted Motions. With extraordinary Agility, He flings Himself over the Ditch; and with a rapid Career, pours Himself \* through the Plain. With unwearied Application, He carries his Rider from one End of the Country to another; and with undaunted Bravery, rushes into the fiercest Rage, and amidst the thickest Havock of the Battle.—Yet, the *Grasshopper* springs with a Bound, altogether as brisk, if not more impetuous.—The *Ant*, in proportion to its Size, is equally nimble; equally strong; and will climb Precipices, which the most courageous Courser dares not attempt

\* *Pours Himself*—This is *Jeremiah's* beautiful and expressive Phrase, כסוס שטר Chap. viii. 6. Which *Virgil* has been ambitious to imitate;

—————*Rauntque effusi Carcere.*

# DIALOGUE XV. 243

to scale.—If the *Snail* is slower in her Motions, She is under no necessity of treading back the Ground, which She has passed. Because, her House is a Part of her travelling Equipage: and whenever She departs, She is still under her own Roof; where-ever She removes, is always at Home.

The *Eagle*, 'tis true, is privileged with Pinions, that out-strip the Wind. Elevated on which, She looks down on all that soars; and sees flying Clouds, and straining Wings, far below. Her optic Nerve so strong, that it meets and sustains the dazzling Beams of Noon: her wide surveying Glance so keen, that from those towering Heights, it discerns the smallest Fish, which sculks at the Bottom of the River.— Yet, neither is that poor Outcast, the groveling and gloomy *Mole*, disregarded by divine Providence. Because she is to dig a Cell in the Earth, and dwell, as it were, in a perpetual Dungeon, her Paws serve her for a Pick-axe and Spade. Her Eye, or rather her visual Speck, is sunk deep into a Socket, that it may suffer no Injury from her rugged Situation: it requires but a very scanty Communication of Light, that she may have no Reason to complain of her darkling Abode. I called her subterranean Habitation a Dungeon; and some People, perhaps, may think it a Grave. But I revoke the Expression. It yields her all the Safety of a fortified *Castle*, and all the Delight of a decorated *Grot*.

Even the *Spider*, though abhorred by Mankind, is evidently the Care of all-sustaining Heaven. She is to live upon Plunder; to support Herself, by tramping the idle, insignificant, sauntering Fly. Suitably to such an Occupation, she possesses a Bag of glutinous



nous Moisture. From this she spins a clammy *Thread*, and weaves it into a tenacious *Net*. Expert as any practised Sportsman, she always spreads it in the most opportune Places. Sensible that her Appearance would create Horror, and deter the Prey from approaching the Snare, when watching for Sport, she retires from Sight. But constantly keeps within Distance, so as to receive the very first Intelligence of what passes in the Toils; and be ready to launch, without a Moment's Delay, upon the struggling Captive. And what is very observable, when Winter chills the World, and no more Insects ramble amidst the Air, foreseeing that her Labour would be vain, she discontinues her Work, and abandons her Stand.

I must by no means forget the little Monarchy, which inhabits the Hive. The *Bees* are to subsist, not as a lawless Banditti, but as a regular Community. 'Tis theirs, to earn a decent Livelihood by honest Industry; not to glut themselves with Carnage, or enrich themselves by Rapine. For which Reason, they are actuated by an invariable Inclination to Society. They possess the truest Notions of domestic Oeconomy, and have enacted the wisest Laws for political Government.—Their indulgent CREATOR has made them a Present of all necessary Implements, both for constructing their *Combs*, and for composing their *Honey*. They have each a portable Vessel with which they bring Home their collected Sweets: and they have all the most commodious Storehouses, in which they deposit their delicious Wares.—Though made for Peace, they know how to use the Sword. They can take  
up



up Arms with the utmost Resolution and Intrepidity, when Arms are requisite to guard their Wealth, or repel their Foes.—Without going through a Course of Botany, they can readily distinguish every Plant, which is most likely to yield the Materials proper for their Business. Without serving an Apprenticeship in the Laboratory, they are complete Practitioners in the Art of Separation and Refinement. They are aware, without borrowing their Information from an Almanack, that the vernal Gleams, and Summer Suns, continue but for a Season. Mindful of this Admonition\*, they improve to the utmost every shining Hour; and lay up a Stock of balmy Treasures, sufficient to supply the whole State, till the Blossoms open a-fresh, and their flowery Harvest returns.

Let the *Peacock* boast, if he pleases, his elegant Topknot and lofty Mien; his Neck adorned with varying Dyes, and his Train bespangled with a Round of Stars.—Yet let him know, that the despised *Butterfly*, and even the loathed *Caterpillar*, display an Attire no less sumptuous; and wear Ornaments, altogether as genteel, if not quite so magnificent.—Does Beauty sit in State on that lordly Bird? She shines in Miniature on the vulgar Insect. Is the Master of this lower Creation, ennobled with the Powers of Reason? The meanest Classes of sensitive Existence, are endued with the Faculty of Instinct. Which gives them a Sagacity, that is neither derived from Observation, nor waits for the Finishings of Experience: which, without a Tutor, teaches them all

Q 3

\* *Venturaeque Hyemis memores, Æstate Laborem  
Experiantur, & in medium quæsitâ reponunt. VIROS*

all necessary Skill; and enables them, without a Pattern, to perform every needful Operation. And, what is far more surprising, never misleads them, either into erroneous Principles, or pernicious Practices: never fails them, in the nicest or most arduous of their Undertakings.

Can you have Patience to follow me, if I step into a different Element, and just visit the *watery World*?—Not one among the innumerable Myriads, which swim the boundless Ocean, but is watched over by that exalted Eye, whose Smiles irradiate the Heaven of Heavens. Not one, but is supported by that Almighty Hand, which crowns Angels and Archangels with Glory.—The condescending G O D, has not only created, but *beautified* them. He has given the most exact Proportion to their Shape, the gayest Colours to their Skin, and a polished Smoothness to their Scales. The Eyes of some are surrounded with a scarlet Circle; the Back of others is diversified with crimson Stains. View them, when they glance along the Stream, or while they are fresh from their native Brine; and the burnished Silver is not more bright, the radiant Rainbow is scarce more glowing, than their vivid, glistening, glossy Hues.

Yet, notwithstanding the Finery of their Apparel, We are under painful Apprehensions for their Welfare.—How can the poor Creatures live, amidst the suffocating Waters?—As they have neither Hands nor Feet, how can they help themselves, or how escape their Enemies?—We are soon freed from our Fears by observing, that they all possess the beneficial, as well as ornamental Furniture of Fins. These

when

when expanded, like Masts above, and Ballast below, poise their floating Bodies, and keep them steadily upright.—We cannot forbear congratulating them on the *flexible* Play, and *vigorous* Activity of their Tails. With which they shoot themselves through the Paths of the Sea, more swiftly than Sails and Oars can waft the Royal Yatch.—But we are lost in Wonder, at the exquisite Contrivance, and delicate Formation of their *Gills*. By which they are accommodated, even in that dense Medium, with the Power of Breathing, and the Benefits of Respiration. A Piece of Mechanism this, indulged to the meanest of the Fry; yet surpassing, infinitely surpassing, in the Fineness of its Structure, and the Felicity of its Operation, whatever is curious in the Works of Art, or commodious in the Palaces of Princes.

*Ther.* Some Persons, *Aspasio*, have the Art of giving *Dignity* to trivial, and *Spirit* to jejune Topics. I cannot but listen, with a pleased Attention, to your Discourse; though it descends to the lowest Scenes, and meanest Productions of Nature.—To make such philosophical Remarks, was usually *my* Province; to add the religious Improvement, *yours*. But *my* Thoughts, at present, are wholly taken up with the Consideration of my SAVIOUR's Righteousness. I can hardly turn my Views, or divert my Speech, to any other Subject. All those amiable Appearances of the external Creation, which I was wont to contemplate with Rapture, afford but a languid Entertainment to my Mind.—Till my Interest in this Divine REDEEMER is ascertained, the Spring may bloom; the Summer shine; and



## 248 D I A L O G U E XV.

Autumn swell with Fruits: but it will be Winter, cheerless, gloomy, desolate *Winter* in my Soul.

*Asp.* You say, *Theron*, You attended to my cursory Hints. Then, your own superior Discernment could not but perceive, how every Part of the exterior World is adjusted, in the most excellent and gracious Manner.—Not the *coarsest* Piece of inactive Matter, but bears the Impress of its MAKER's fashioning Skill.—Not a *single* Creature, however insignificant, but exhibits evident Demonstrations of his providential Care.—His Hand is liberal, profusely liberal, to all that breathes, and all that has a Being.

Let me only ask—and to introduce this Question, with the greater Propriety; to give it a more forcible Energy on our Minds; was the principal Design of the preceding Remarks—Let me ask; *Does GOD take Care for Oxen\**? Is He a generous Benefactor to the meanest Animals, to the lowest Reptiles? Are his munificent Regards extended farther still, and vouchsafed even to the most worthless Vegetables? And shall they be withheld from *You*, my dear Friend, and from *me*?—Not one among all the numberless Productions, which tread the Ground, or stand rooted to the Soil, wants any Convenience, that is proper for its respective State. And will his heavenly FATHER deny *Theron*, what is so necessary to his present Comfort, and his final Happiness? Impossible †!

*Ther.*

\* 1 Cor. ix. 9.

† I know not how to forbear transcribing a Paragraph, from one of our periodical Papers; which contains a Proposal



*Ther.* I wish for, but I can hardly hope to partake of, that spiritual Blessing; which always included my whole Happiness, and now ingrosses my whole Concern.

*Asp.* *Not hope to partake of!*—What Foundation, what Shadow of Pretence, has this desponding Temper, either in Reason, or in Scripture? Is it not evident from the whole Book of Revelation? Is it not apparent, through the whole Compass of Nature? That the Almighty LORD, “who governeth the “World with the Palm of his Hand \*,” is remote, infinitely remote, from a niggardly Disposition. He not only provideth for the Wants, but even *satisfieth the Desire of every living Thing* †.

Consider those stately *Poppies*, which are now the principal Ornament of the Garden. They have  
no

posaf for *adapting* natural Philosophy to the Capacity of *Children*. Wishing, at the same time, that the ingenious Author would enlarge his Sketch into a Treatise; and execute the Plan, which He has so judiciously projected, and of which He has given Us so delicate a Specimen.

After some Remarks on the Sagacity of Birds, their Industry, and other surprising Properties, He adds; “—Is it for Birds, O LORD, that Thou hast joined “together so many Miracles, which they have no Knowledge of? Is it for Men who give no Attention to “them? Is it for the Curious, who are satisfied with “admiring, without raising their Thoughts to Thee? “Or is it not rather visible, that thy Design has been “to call Us to thyself, by such a Spectacle? To make “Us sensible of thy Providence and infinite Wisdom; “and to fill Us with *Confidence*, in thy Bounty, who “watchest, with so much Care and Tenderness, over “Birds, though two of them are sold but for a Far- “thing?”

\* Eccclus. xviii. 3.

† Psal. cxlv. 16.

no Tongue to request the least Favour. Yet the ever-gracious MAKER, clothes them from his own Wardrobe, and decks them with exquisite Beauty.—Observe the *young Ravens*, which sit carelessly coking on yonder Boughs. Do they cry \* for Food? It is in hoarse unarticulate Accents. Yet the all-supporting GOD, overlooks their Ignorance; hears Meaning in their Noise; and supplies their every Need, from his own spontaneous Bounty.—If He accommodates the former, though incapable of asking; if He attends to the latter, though insensible of their Benefactor; can He *disregard* our pressing Wants? Will He *reject* our earnest Petitions? Especially, when We seek such pure and exalted Gifts, as it is both his Delight and his Honour to bestow.

O! my Friend, look abroad into universal Nature, and look away every disquieting Thought.

*Ther.* Did You inquire what Pretence I have for this desponding Temper? Alas! I have more than a Pretence. I have a Reason. A Reason too obvious; my great *Unworthiness*!

*Asp.* Pray, where was the Worthiness of the stiff-necked *Israelites*? Yet the LORD *bare them, and carried them, all the Days of old* †.—Where was the Worthiness of *Saul* the Blasphemer? Yet the blessed JESUS made Him a chosen Vessel, and set Him as a Signet on his Right hand.—You deserve nothing at the Hand of GOD our SAVIOUR. Neither did *Joseph's Brethren* deserve any Kindness from the Viceroy of Egypt. Yet he delivered *them* from Fa-

mine,

\* Psal. cxlvii. 9.

† Isa. lxii. 9.

mine, who sold *Him* to Slavery. He settled them in the choicest Territories, who cast *Him* into the horrible Pit. He shewed *Himself* a Friend and a Father to those unnatural Relations; who were his actual Betrayers, and his intentional Murderers.— And can You persuade yourself, will You harbour a Suspicion, that *CHRIST* is less compassionate than *Joseph*? Shall a frail Mortal out-vie *EMMANUEL* in Beneficence?

*Ther.* Is not *some* Righteousness of our own indispensibly required, in order to our Participation of the Righteousness of *CHRIST*?

*Asp.* Yes, such a Righteousness as the Samaritan Woman \*, and *Zaccheus* the Publican possessed. Or such as the *Philippian* Jailor, and the profligate *Corinthians* might boast †.—*Zaccheus* was a Man of infamous Character, and Chief among the Extortioners. The Jailor was a barbarous Persecutor, and in Purpose a Self-murderer. Yet our *LORD* says of the former, *This Day*, without injoining any Course of previous Preparation, *is Salvation come to thine House* ‡. *St. Paul* directs the latter, without insisting upon any antecedent Righteousness, to *believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST*; and assures the poor alarmed Sinner, that in so doing, He should be saved.

So that nothing is required, in order to our Participation of *CHRIST* and his Benefits, but a Conviction of our Need, a Sense of *their* Worth, and a Willingness to receive them in the appointed Way: receive them, as the freest of Gifts, or as Matter of mere Grace. *Come, and take freely* ||, is our *MA-STER's*

\* John iv. 18.  
xix. 9.

† 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.  
§ Acts xvi. 31.

‡ Luke  
|| Rev. xxii. 17.



STER's Language; without staying to acquire any graceful Qualities, is his Meaning.

*Ther.* Surely, to come without any Holiness, without any *decent* Preparative, must be a gross *Indignity* to the Divine *JESUS*. Whoever presents a Petition to any earthly Sovereign, will think it absolutely necessary, not to appear in a slovenly Dress, much less in filthy Raiment. Does not our LORD Himself, in the Parable of the Wedding-Garment, inculcate this very Point, and caution Us against a presumptuous Approach?

*Asp.* In the Parable You mention *CHRIST* is both the Bridegroom, the Feast, and the Wedding-Garment \*. And *who* are invited to an Union with this Bridegroom? To be Guests at this Feast? To be arrayed with this Wedding-Garment? — The Messengers are sent, not to the Mansion-houses of the Rich, or the Palaces of the Mighty; but to the *High-ways and Hedges*. Where Misery mourns; and Poverty pines; and Baseness hides her Head. — To *whom* is their Message addressed? To the *Poor*, the *Maimed*, the *Halt*, the *Blind* †. Persons who have no amiable or recommending Endowments, but every lothesome and disgusting Property. Yet these (mark the Passage, my dear Friend; mark well the encouraging Circumstance) *these* are not only not forbidden, but intreated — importuned — and, by all the Arts of Persuasion, by every weighty or winning Motive, *compelled to come in*. — And after all this, surely,

\* *Matt.* xxii. 11. *Hæc Vestis est Justitia CHRISTI*, BENJEL. in Loc.

† *Luke* xiv. 21.



surely, it cannot be an Act of Presumption to accept, but must be a Breach of Duty to refuse the Invitation.

*Ther.* You take no notice of the Man, who was found without a Wedding-Garment. Which is by far the most *alarming* Incident, and that which gives me no small Uneasiness.

*Asp.* And does my *Theron* take proper Notice of the Divine Declaration? *I have prepared my Dinner,* says the KING eternal. *All Things are ready\*.*

“Whatever is necessary for the Justification, the Holiness, the complete Salvation of Sinners, is provided in the Merit and the Grace of my SON. Let them come therefore, as to a nuptial Banquet; and freely enjoy my Munificence; and feast their Souls with the royal Provision.”

The Man without a Wedding-Garment, denotes the specious *superficial* Professor; who is called by CHRIST's Name, but has never put on CHRIST JESUS by Faith.—Shall I tell You more plainly whom this Character represents? You yourself, my dear *Theron*, was some Months ago, in the State of this unhappy Creature. When You trusted in Yourself, and thought highly of your own, thought meanly of your SAVIOUR's Righteousness.

I congratulate my Friend, on his happy Deliverance from so dangerous a Condition. You and I are now like the returning Prodigal. Let us remember, that He came with no Recommendation, either of Dress, of Person, or of Character. None but his Nakedness, his Misery, and an Acknowledgment

\* Matt. xxii. 4.

ledgment of Vileness, which had every aggravating, not one extenuating Circumstance. Yet He was received—received with inexpressible Indulgence; and clothed with that first, that *best*, that divinest *Robe*\*, the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.

Let Us accustom Ourselves to consider this incomparable Robe, under its evangelical Character. It is not a Matter of Bargain, nor the Subject of Sale, but a Deed of Gift. *The Gift of Righteousness*, says the Apostle. And Gifts, We all know, are not to be purchased, but received.

*Ther.* Is nothing then, nothing to be done on our Part?—No Heavenly-mindedness to be exercised? No Victory over our Lusts gained? No Fruits of Sanctification produced?

*Asp.* These legal Apprehensions! How closely they cleave to my *Theron's* Mind! But, I hope, the Word of GOD, which pierceth to the dividing asunder the Soul and Spirit, will give the severing Blow.—And what says that sacred Word? It describes the Gospel, as a *Will or Testament*†; and

\* *Luke* xv. 22. *Τὸν γὰρ αὐτοῦ τὸν πατέρα.*

† *Heb.* ix. 16, 17. This Notion not only runs through the Scriptures, but stands conspicuous even in their Title Page.—What are they called? *THE OLD* and *THE NEW TESTAMENT*.—What is a Testament? An authentic Deed, in which Estates are transmitted, and Legacies bequeathed. In other Testaments, some *earthly* Possession; in this, the *heavenly* Patrimony, even all the Riches of Grace, and the everlasting Inheritance of Glory.—Did we consider the Scriptures in this Light, it would be a most engaging Invitation, to search them with Affiduity and Pleasure. What Child is willing to continue ignorant of a deceased Parent's last Will and Testament? Who does not covet to know, what Ho-

nours,

all its glorious Blessings, as *Legacies* bequeathed by the dying *JESUS*.—When your old Acquaintance *Charicles*, left You a handsome Legacy; what did you do, to establish your Title, and make it your own?

*Ther.* My Title was pre-established, by my Friend's Donation. I had nothing to do, but to claim, to accept, and to possess.

*Asp.* Do the very same, in the present Case. They who believe, are Heirs, undoubted Heirs of the Righteousness which is by Faith\*.—Sure you cannot suppose, that *CHRIST*'s Kindness is less sincere, or that *CHRIST*'s Donations are less valid, than those of an earthly Testator.

*Ther.* This Illustration hardly reaches the Point. I speak not of doing any thing, by way of *Merit*, but by way of *Qualification*.

*Asp.* If there be any Qualification, I think, it is our extreme Indigence. This, indeed, it will be proper to have: and this, I presume, you are not without. Other Qualification, neither Reason prescribes, nor Scripture requires.

*Reason prescribes no other.*—The Gifts of the great eternal SOVEREIGN are intended, not to recognize our imaginary Worth, but to aggrandize our Views of his Mercy and Grace. To answer such a Design, the Unworthy and the Sinners are duly qualified; nay, are the only qualified Persons.

*Scripture requires no other.*—The ever merciful SAVIOUR says not; They are unqualified for my

nours, Hereditaments, and Wealth devolve to his Enjoyment, by such an interesting and venerable Conveyance?

\* Heb. xi. 7.



my Merits. They have no valuable or noble Acquirements. But this is his tender Complaint; *They will not come to me*, just as they are; with all their Sins about them; with all their Guilt upon them; *that they may have Life* \*.—Pray, take notice of this Text; and you will see Things placed in a new Light, ranged in a new Order. Sanctification, Heavenly-mindedness, and a Victory over our Lusts, are not so much the Qualities which He *requires*, as the Blessings which He will *confer*.

*Ther.* “The Unworthy and Sinners, the only “qualified!” Of this Expression I cannot but take particular Notice.—Then *Judas* should stand in the first Rank of qualified Persons; and the devout Centurion, *whose Prayers and Alms had come up as a Memorial before G O D*, was thereby unqualified for the Favour of Heaven.

*Assp.* If you observed my Expression, I spoke in the hypothetical Manner. Made a Supposition, rather than advanced an Assertion. *If* there be any Qualification, this is the only one. But, strictly speaking, there is no such Thing. The impulsive or inclining Cause, of all G O D's Favour shewn, of all G O D's Goodness exercised, is—from the Creature? No; but from *Himself*, Himself alone. *He has Mercy*, not because this or that Person is amiable, is meet, or qualified, but *because he will have Mercy*.—And as for our Need of Mercy and Reconciliation, arising from our Sinfulness, this can no more constitute a *real* Qualification for the Blessings, than an Act of Rebellion can qualify for the first Honours of the State.

But

\* John v. 40.



But this We must allow, that such Need, such Misery, such Sefulness, illustrate the *Freeneſs*, and manifest the *Riches* of Grace. And this We should never forget, that GOD's first and leading Purpose, in all his favourable Dispensations to fallen Man, is, to demonstrate the Sovereignty, and advance the Glory of his Grace.—The LORD, promising a very extraordinary Deliverance to *Israel*, says; *not for your Sakes, be it known unto You, do I this* \* *ſig-*  
*nal Act of Kindneſs.*—What then is the Inducement? We find it in the following Declaration; *I, even I am HE, that blotteth out your Transgreſſions for my own Sake* †, *and according to the good Pleaſure of my Will.*—What is the End of all? It is FOR THE PRAISE OF THE GLORY OF HIS GRACE ‡. A proper Motto this, for all the Displays of divine Goodneſs to ſinful Men. It has been inſcribed by the Hand of Truth and Inſpiration. Time and Eternity, inſtead of erasing the Lines, will only ſtamp them deeper, and open them wider.

*Ther.* This is ſuch a Gift!—To be intereſted in all the Merits of *CHRIST*! To have his immaculate Righteouſneſs imputed to my Soul!—So that from henceforth there ſhall be no Fear of Condemnation, but a comfortable Enjoyment of freeſt Love, and a delightful Expectation of completeſt Glory!

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R

*Aſp.*

\* Ezek. xxxvi. 32.

† *Iſa.* xliii. 25. לְמַעַן *For my own Sake.* Which teaches Us, that GOD, and nothing in the Creature, is the original, intire, ſole Cause of all Grace and every gracious Vouchſafement. It is not only *by Him*, and *through Him*, but *to Him*; for the Honour of his benign Perfections, that We are pardoned, accepted, ſaved.

‡ Eph. i. 6.

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*Asp.* If this rich Donation, surpasses your very Thoughts, and fill You with grateful Astonishment; it is so much the better adapted to display, what the Scripture very emphatically styles, the *abundant*, the *superabundant*, the *exceeding abundant* \* Grace of our GOD.—GOD hath Pleasure in the Prosperity of his Servants. He is a boundless Ocean of Love; ever flowing, yet absolutely inexhaustible. See! What an innumerable Variety of Benefits, are transmitted from yonder Sun, to gladden all the Regions of Nature! Yet the Sun is but a *Spark*; its highest Splendor, no more than a *Shade*; its uninterrupted and most profuse Communications of Light, a poor diminutive *Scantling*; compared with the Riches of Divine *Benignity*.

The Servant in the Parable, who owed ten thousand Talents, craved only some merciful Forbearance. Whereas, his generous Lord remitted the whole Sum, and gave him an Acquaintance in full; *I forgave Thee all that Debt* †.—You wonder, and very deservedly, at such vast Generosity. But, what had been your Admiration to see the noble Master admitting this obnoxious Slave, to a Share in his Dignity? What if he had made so worthless a Wretch, the chief of his Family, and the Heir of his Estate? This perhaps, You would say, exceeds the Bounds of Credibility. Yet GOD Almighty's stupendous Beneficence exceeds all this. He not only spares guilty Creatures, but makes them his *Children*; makes them *Inheritors* of his Kingdom; and, as an

Intro-

\* ὑπερβαλλουσα χάρις. 2 Cor. ix. 14. — ὑπερπερισσευσεν ἡ χάρις. Rom. v. 20. — ὑπερεκλείσασεν ἡ χάρις. 2 Tim. i. 14.

† Matt. xviii. 32.

Introduction to all, or rather as the Crown of all, makes them *Partakers* \* of his SON.

*Ther.* The Gift is inestimable; of more Value than all Worlds. It will render me blessed and happy, Now and for Ever. And may so unworthy a Creature look for a Blessing, thus superlatively excellent?

*Asp.* Unworthy!—My dear Friend, dwell no longer upon that obsolete Topic. The greatest *Unworthiness* is no Objection in *CHRIST*'s Account, when the Soul is convinced of Sin, and the Heart desirous of a *SAVIOUR*. And as for *Worthiness*, this is as much disavowed by the Gospel, as *equivocal* Generation † is exploded by the Discoveries of our improved Philosophy.—Nay farther, this Notion is diametrically *contrary* to the Gospel, and totally *subversive* of the Covenant of Grace.

*Ther.* In what Respect?

*Asp.* Because, it would make our own Duty and Obedience the Terms. Whereas, the Terms were *CHRIST*'s Suffering, and *CHRIST*'s Obedience. *These* are the Hinge on which that great Transaction turns, and on which the Hope of the World hangs.

*Ther.* Be more particular, *Aspasio*.

R 2

*Asp.*

\* Heb. iii. 14.

† The *Ancients* imagined, that many Vegetables and Insects were produced by, I know not what, plastic Power in the Sun and other Elements. This is called *equivocal* Generation. Whereas, the *modern* Philosophers maintain, that every Individual of this Kind, derives its Being from some Parent-Vegetable or Parent-Animal. This is styled *univocal* Generation.

*Asp.* The first Covenant was made with *Adam*, for Himself and Us. Breaking it, He lost his original Righteousness, and became subject to Death. Was, at once, a *Bankrupt* and a *Rebel*.—Now you cannot suppose, that the Almighty M A J E S T Y would enter into a fresh Covenant, with an *insolvent* and *attainted* Creature. It pleased, therefore the SECOND PERSON of the adorable T R I N I T Y, to undertake our Cause; to become our Surety; and put Himself in our Stead. *With Him* the second Covenant was made. He was charged with the Performance of the Conditions; thereby to obtain Pardon and Righteousness, Grace and Glory, for all his People. *I have made a Covenant with my CHOSEN \* ONE*, is the Language of the MOST HIGH. And the Terms were (You will permit me to repeat the momentous Truth) not your Worthiness or mine, but the Incarnation, the Obedience, the Death of GOD's ever-blessed SON.

*Ther.*

\* *Psal.* lxxxix. 3. It is generally allowed, that this Psalm, in its *sublimest* Sense, is referable to *CHRIST*; and, in its *full* Extent, is referable *only* unto *CHRIST*. If so, I think, it would be more significant and emphatical, to render בּוֹחֵרִי My CHOSEN ONE.—This will furnish out a very clear and cogent Argument to prove, that the Covenant of Grace was made with our LORD *JESUS*. Just such an Argument as the Apostle uses, to convince the *Galatians*, That the Promises of the Covenant were made to the same Divine PERSON, *Gal.* iii. 16.—From both which Premises this important Conclusion follows; That Justification and every spiritual Blessing are the *Purchase* of *CHRIST*'s Obedience; are lodged in Him as the great *Proprietary*; are communicated to Sinners, only through the Exercise of *Faith*, or in a Way of Believing. See *Zech.* ix. 11.



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*Ther.* Has Man then no Office assigned, no Part to act, in the Covenant of Grace?

*Asp.* He has: but it is a Part, which my Friend seems very loth to discharge. His Part is to *accept* the Blessings, fully purchased by the SAVIOUR, and freely presented to the Sinner. His Part is, not to dishonour the REDEEMER's gracious Interposition, and infinitely sufficient Performance, by hankering after any Merit of his own. His Part (why will You constrain me to reiterate in this Manner?) is, not to bring Money in his Hand, with the ten Brethren; but, with an empty Hand, and like an impoverished *Lazarus*, to take hold of GOD's Covenant \*.

*Ther.* If this be the Nature of the New Covenant, I must confess, I have hitherto been ignorant of the Gospel.

*Asp.* And from hence arises your present Distress. From hence your Averseness to receive Comfort.—You are a Philosopher, *Theron*; and have been accustomed to examine nicely the Proportion of Objects, rather than to weigh them in the Balance of the Sanctuary. Here you find all Proportion swallowed up and lost. This quite overthrows all your Conclusions, drawn from the Fitness of Things. Here, *Man* is nothing, less than nothing, while *Grace* is all in all.—And should we not, however unworthy in Ourselves, magnify the Grace of our GOD?

*Ther.* Most certainly.

*Asp.* How can this be done, but by expecting great and superlatively precious Blessings from his

R 3

Hand?

\* Isa. lvi. 4.

Hand?—*Alexander*, You know, had a famous, but indigent Philosopher, in his Court. Our Adept in Science, was once particularly straitened in his Circumstances. To whom should He apply, but to his Patron, the Conqueror of the World? His Request was no sooner made, than granted. *Alexander* gives Him a Commission, to receive of his Treasurer whatever He wanted. He immediately demands, in his Sovereign's Name, a hundred Talents\*, —The Treasurer, surprised at so large a Demand, refuses to comply: but waits upon the King, and represents the Affair. Adding withal, how unreasonable He thought the Petition, and how exorbitant the Sum.—*Alexander* hears Him with Patience: but, as soon as He had ended his Remonstrance, replies; “ Let the Money be instantly paid. I am delighted “ with this Philosopher's way of thinking. He has “ done me a singular Honour; and shewed, by the “ Largeness of his Request, what a high Idea He “ has conceived, both of my superior Wealth, and “ my royal Munificence.”

Thus, my dear *Theron*, let Us honour, what the inspired Penman styles, *The marvelous Loving-kindness of JEHOVAH*. From the King, *whose Name is the LORD of Hosts*, let Us expect—not barely what corresponds with our low Models of Generosity—much less what We suppose proportioned to our fancied Deserts—but what is suitable to the unknown Magnificence of his Name, and the unbounded Benevolence of his Heart. Then We shall chearfully and assuredly trust, that *CHRIST*  
*JESUS*

1. About ten thousand Pounds.

JESUS will be made of GOD to Us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption: that HE, who hath given Himself for Us\*, will give Us of his SPIRIT†, and will give unto Us eternal Life‡.

*Ther.* Yes; upon Condition, that We fight the good Fight, and finish our Course of Duty. *Henceforth*, says the Apostle, after this is done, *there is laid up for me*, and for other victorious Soldiers, for other faithful Labourers, *a Crown of Righteousness*.

*Asp.* To such Persons the Crown will assuredly be vouchsafed. But is it vouchsafed, on account of their successful Warfare, or persevering Obedience? If so, *Israel may vaunt themselves*, and say, *Mine own Hand*, not the REDEEMER's Interposition, *hath saved me* §.

Not to repeat what has already been alledged, in Opposition to this Opinion—Not to produce what might farther be urged, from a Variety of scriptural Testimonies—I shall only desire You to observe, what the Apostle Himself adds in this very Place, *There is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness*: but is this the Pay, proportionate and due to his own Services? Is it what He claims and demands, on the Foot of Duty performed?—The very Title of the Reward implies the contrary. It is *a Crown of Righteousness*, because purchased by the meritorious and consummate Righteousness of CHRIST. The Action of the Judge declares the contrary: *which the LORD, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day*. It is, You see, an Act of Favour; the Issue

R 4

of

\* Eph. v. 2.  
§ Judg. vii. 8.

† John iv. 13.

‡ John x. 28.

of unmerited Bounty ; what neither Saint, nor Martyr, nor Apostle enjoys, but only by way of gracious Donation \*.

I would fain have my *Theron* form more honourable Apprehensions concerning the Mercy and the Bounty of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. He will bestow, what You suppose He exacts. He is really a Benefactor, where You would represent Him as a Task-master. *The LORD will give Grace, as well as Glory*. He knows, You have neither Strength nor Merit, therefore He will supply your Want of both, from his own unfathomable Fullness.

*Ther.* Ah! My *Aspasio*! You don't know my State. I have not only no Merit, but great Guilt †.

Was

\* 2 *Tim.* iv. 8. The Word *αποδωσθαι*, as it stands in the present Connection, is, I think, very properly explained by a late pious Professor of Divinity at *Glasgow*: *Profitetur Fiduciam suam de gratuita Mercede, quam DEUS gratis promissit omnibus Fidelibus, & ut justus Judex, juste simul & ex Gratia rependet, non ex Merito ullo nostro, sed priora Dona sua gratuita posterioribus gratuito cumulando.* *DICSONI Expos. Analyt.*

† I believe, No one experienced in the spiritual Life will suspect, that *Theron* speaks out of Character.—Conscience, when once alarmed, is a stubborn and uncere- monious Thing. It pays no Deference to Wealth: it never stands in awe of Grandeur: neither can it be soothed by the Refinements of Education, or the Attainments of Learning. And We generally find, that a most unaccountable Propensity to *Self-worthiness*, strongly possesses the new-awakened Convert. He is perpetually raising Objections, founded on the Want of personal Merit; notwithstanding all our Remonstrances, to quiet his Fears, and remove his Jealousies. It is truly a hard Task,



Was, by Nature, a Child of Wrath. Have been, by Practice, a Slave of Sin. And, what is worse, am still corrupt; have still a carnal Heart.—And has not such a Wretch forfeited all Title to the Divine Favour? Nay, does He not deserve the Vengeance of eternal Fire?

*Ans.* That We all deserve this Misery, is beyond Dispute. I am truly glad, that We are sensible of our Demerit. Here our Recovery begins. Now We are to believe, that the *LORD JESUS* has satisfied Divine Justice; has paid a glorious Price, on purpose to obtain for such ill-deserving, such Hell-deserving Creatures, all Pardon, all Holiness, and everlasting Happiness. According to the Import of that charming Scripture, *When We were Enemies* (and what is there in an Enemy, to bespeak Favour, or deserve Benefits?) *We were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his SON\**.

You have *great Guilt*. But is this a Reason, why You should be excluded from the Blessings of the Covenant? Contemplate the State of that forlorn and wretched Outcast, described in the sixteenth of *Ezekiel*. An Infant in its Blood: this represents a Sinner, who has nothing to excite Love, but all that may provoke Abhorrence. Yet what says the HOLY ONE of *Israel*? *When I saw Thee*, not washed, and purified, and made meet for my Acceptance,

Task, for a Mind, naturally leavened with legal Pride, to come naked and miserable to *CHRIST*—to come, divested of every Recommendation but that of extreme Wretchedness; and receive, from the Hand of unmerited Benignity, the free Riches of evangelical Grace.

\* Rom. v. 10.

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ceptance, but *polluted in thy Blood* \* ; loathsome with Defilement, and laden with Iniquity : Then, even then *I said unto Thee, Live : I spread my Skirt over Thee ; and Thou becamest mine.* This is the Manner of his Proceeding, not barely to one Nation, but to all his People ; not in one Period of Time only, but through all Generations.

You are *still corrupt* : One that is sensible of his Corruption, and acknowledges his Sinfulness ! Then You are the *very Person*, for whom the SAVIOUR's Righteousness is intended ; to whom it is promised. — You are a Governor of the County-hospital, *Theron*. You have been industrious in promoting, and are active in supporting, that excellent Institution ; where Medicine with her healing Stores, and Religion with her heavenly Hopes, act as joint Handmaids to Charity. What are the Circumstances, which render any Persons the proper Objects, for an Admission into your Infirmary ?

*Ther.* Their Poverty, and their Distemper. Without Poverty, they would not need ; and free from Distemper, they would not prize, the Benefit of our modern *Bethesda*.

*Asp.* Apply this to the Case under Consideration, The whole World is in a State of spiritual Disorder, *CHRIST* is styled, by the inspired Writer, *The LORD*

\* The Words are peculiarly emphatical ; not only doubled, but redoubled. To denote, at once, the *Strangeness* of the Fact, yet the *Certainty* of the Favour. *When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own Blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live : Yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy Blood, Live.* Ezek. xvi. 6.

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*LORD our Healer* \*. The Gift of his Righteousness, the Balm of his Blood, and the Influences of his SPIRIT, are the sovereign Restorative. And sure it cannot be a fanciful Persuasion of our Health, but a feeling Conviction of our Disease, which renders Us proper Objects of his recovering Grace.—*He came, not to call the Righteous, the Righteous in their own Eyes, but Sinners* † ; self-condemned and ruined Sinners, to give them *Repentance*, and Pardon, and Newness of Life.

*Ther.* But, if any foolish and refractory Patients have abused our Beneficence ; it is a standing unalterable Rule of the House, never to admit them a second Time ; however pressing their Exigencies, or however powerful their Recommender. I have, not once only, but through the whole Course of my Life, abused the marvelous Loving-kindness of the LORD.

*Assp.* And is not the LORD superior to all his Creatures, in Acts of *Pardon*, as well as of *Power* ? Yes ; as those Heavens are higher, than this prostrate Earth ; so much more enlarged and extensive is the divine Clemency—than the widest Sphere of human Kindness, shall I say ? Rather than the boldest Flights of human Imagination. Your Statutes are inexorable, in case of one notorious Irregularity committed. *But the free Gift* of a REDEEMER's Righteousness is vouchsafed, notwithstanding *many Offences, unto Justification* ‡. It is the Glory of our Almighty RULER, and redounds to the Honour of his crucified SON, to pass over || not a single Transgression

\* Exod. xv. 26.

† Rom. v. 16.

‡ Matt. ix. 13. Acts v. 31.

|| Prov. xix. 11.

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gression only, but a Multitude of Provocations; to be altogether as unequalled in Mercy, as HE is absolutely supreme in Majesty.

As it is the *grossest Pride*, to entertain high Notions of our own Accomplishments, or to expect eternal Life on the Score of our own Obedience; so it will be the *greatest Affront* to the Grandeur of *CHRIST*'s Merits, and the Freeness of his Grace, if We suppose our Crimes too heinous to be forgiven, or our Persons too vile to be accepted.

*Theron* paused.—These Considerations seemed to operate: This Anodyne to take effect.—Desirous to improve the favourable Juncture, and impart the needed Consolation, *Aspasio* added:

How often did the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* disregard the Warnings, and reject the Counsels of our Blessed LORD! How justly might HE have sworn in his Wrath; “They shall never hear the joyful Sound of my Gospel more. The Blessings, which they have so wantonly despised, and so wickedly abused, shall be irrevocably withdrawn.”—Instead of passing such a Sentence, this is the Charge, which, after his Resurrection, He gives to his Apostles: *Let Repentance and Remission of Sins be preached, in my Name, to all Nations, BEGINNING AT JERUSALEM*\*.—“At *Jerusalem*, LORD! Have not the Men of that ungrateful and barbarous City been deaf to thy tenderest Importunities? Did they not persecute Thee unto Condemnation and Death? Are not their Weapons still reeking, as it were, with thy Blood; and their Tongues still shooting out Arrows, even bitter Words? By  
“which

\* Luke xxiv. 47.



“ which they would murder thy Character, as they  
 “ have already crucified thy Person.”—Yet these  
 Wretches (and could any be more inhuman? Could  
 any be more unworthy?) are not only not abhorred,  
 but unto them is the Message of Grace, and the  
 Word of Salvation sent. Nay, to shew the unpa-  
 relleled Freeness of our REDEEMER’s Grace,  
 These are *first* upon the heavenly List. The glad  
 Tidings of Pardon and Life, which are to be pub-  
 lished through the World, *must begin* (amazing Mer-  
 cy!) MUST BEGIN at *Jerusalem*.

*Ther.* Thus much I may venture to profess in my  
 own Behalf: That I long for this Blessing—I pray  
 for this Blessing—But I cannot see my Title, to this  
 comprehensive and inestimable Blessing, *clear*.

*Asp.* I behold it perfectly clear.—Some Days ago,  
 a worthy Clergyman, who lately came to settle in  
 the Neighbourhood, did Himself the Honour of mak-  
 ing one at your Table. After Dinner, You shewed  
 Him your Library; We took a Walk in your Gar-  
 den; and made the agreeable Tour of the Fish-  
 ponds. Then — with that amiable Frankness of  
 Mien and Accent, which is so peculiar to my Friend,  
 and exceedingly endears all his Favours—You told  
 Him; “ That He was as welcome to any Book in  
 “ your Study, as if the whole Collection was his  
 “ own. That if, on a Visit from some Acquain-  
 “ tance of superior Rank, He should wish to be ac-  
 “ commodated with a more delicate Entertainment  
 “ than usual; the Productions of your Waters, and  
 “ of your Hot-beds, were intirely at his Service.  
 “ And that his Acceptance of your Offers, without  
 “ the

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“ the least Shyness or Reserve, would be the most  
“ pleasing Compliment, He could pay You on the  
“ Occasion.”

What says the great PROPRIETOR of all Good ? *If any Man*, however unworthy his Person, or obnoxious his Character, *thirst* ; thirst for the Blessings of my evangelical Kingdom ; *let Him come unto ME*, the Fountain of these living Waters, *and drink* his Fill \*.—You Yourself acknowledge, that You long for the sacred Privileges of the Gospel. Your Heart is awakened into habitual and lively Desires after the Salvation of *CHRIST*. What is this but, in the spiritual Sense, to thirst ? To You therefore the Promise is made. To You the Riches of this benign Dispensation belong.

That Clergyman has not the least Suspicion of being disappointed, in case He should send for a Brace of Carp from your Canal, or a fine Melon from your Garden.—Why is He so confident ? Because He has done You any signal Service ? No ; but because You have passed your Word, and made the generous Offer.—And why should You harbour the least Doubt, concerning the Divine Veracity ? Why should You call in question your Right to these heavenly Treasures ? Since it is founded on a Grant, altogether as *free*, altogether as *clear*, as your own indulgent Concession ; and infinitely more *firm*, than any human Engagement. Founded on the Fidelity of that sublime BEING, who “ remembers his Covenant  
“ and Promise to a thousand Generations.”

*Ther.* It is impossible to confute, yet difficult to believe, what You urge.

*Asp.*

\* John vii. 37.

*Ass.* What I urge, is not the Voice of a few dubious Passages, nicely culled from the Book of GOD, or forcibly wrested by the Interpretation of Man. The whole Tenour of Inspiration runs, with the greatest Perspicuity, and the greatest Uniformity, in this delightful Strain.—Let me, out of a Multitude, produce another Express from the Court of Heaven. *Ho! every One that thirsteth, come Ye to the Waters, even He that hath no Money. Come Ye, buy and eat: yea; come, buy Wine and Milk, without Money and without Price* \*.—*Wine and Milk*, undoubtedly signify the Pardon of our Sins, and the Justification of our Persons; the Communications of sanctifying Grace, and the Hope of eternal Glory. These are nourishing and refreshing to the Soul, as Milk the richest of Foods, and as Wine the best of Cordials, are to the Body.—These, You see, are to be obtained, *without Money, and without Price*: without any Merit of our own; without any Plea deduced from Ourselves; by poor, undone, perishing Bankrupts.—They are to be enjoyed by *every One*, who unfeignedly esteems them, and humbly seeks them. No Exception is made. No exclusive Clause added. It is not said, Any One that is *worthy*, but Every One that *thirsteth*.—To leave no Room for any misgiving Apprehensions, the kind Invitation is repeated; *buy and eat; buy Wine and Milk*. The invaluable yet free Tender, is confirmed again and again; *He that hath no Money; without Money; without Price*. And both are pressed upon Us with a very remarkable, with the most affectionate Vehemence; *Come Ye; come Ye; yea come*.

Had

\* Isa. lv. 1.

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Had our heavenly BENEFCTOR permitted Us to draw up this Instrument of Conveyance, and word it according to our own Wish; what Language could We have contrived, to render either the Grant more free, or our Claim more secure?

*Ther.* These are chearing Truths. They amount to little less than a Demonstration. And I am ready to declare, in the Language of *Agrippa*; *Almost Thou persuadest me to commence a Believer.*

*Asp.* And why, my dear Friend, why not *altogether*? Can You distrust the Sincerity of the divine Overtures? If the Overtures are real, your Title is unquestionable.—Nay; there is more than an Overture. You have an *actual* Gift, from the Almighty MAJESTY. *To Us*, says the Prophet—including all that wait for the Redemption of *CHRIST*, and the Consolation of *Israel*—*a Child is born* \*. *To Us*—He repeats the precious Truth; to declare his exuberant Joy †, and denote the absolute Certainty ‡ of the Thing—*a Son is given*. Even GOD's own SON, the ever-blessed *JESUS*, to be our PROPITIATION, our SURETY, our complete REDEEMER.

Just cast a Look upon yonder neat Lodge. Though placed in the Center of a spacious Field, it seems

\* Isa. ix. 6.

† *Virgil* has copied the Prophet's *fine Manner*. He represents Joy, uttering her Sentiments, in the same spirited Strain, with the same reiterated Earnestness:

—————*Humilemque videmus*  
*Italiam. Italiam primus conclamat Achates.*  
*Italiam læto Socii Clamore salutant.*

‡ See Gen. xli. 32.



seems to be contiguous with the Extremity of the Vista. The Eye, traveling over such a Length of Ground, has almost lost the Windows, and the decent Ornaments of the Front. But I shall not soon lose the Idea of that amiable Munificence; which, as I was rambling one pleasant Morning, and accidentally called at the House, I learned from its present Owner.—He was, I find, one of your Servants. Had spent several Years in your Family. When He settled in the World, You bestowed upon him that commodious Box, and a pretty adjacent Farm; to possess, without Molestation or Controul, during his Life.—Does He not reckon the little Estate, by virtue of your Donation, to be his own? As much his own, for the Time prescribed, as if He had paid an Equivalent in Money?—Since the LORD JEHOVAH *has given* Us his SON, and all his unutterable Merits; why should We not, with an Assurance of Faith, receive the incomparable Gift? Why should we not confide in it, as firmer than the firmest Deed? and far more inviolable, than any royal Patent?—Especially, since it has been *sealed* to Us, in every sacramental Ordinance; and *witnessed* by every good Motion of the HOLY SPIRIT in our Hearts.

*Ther.* My Servant never affronted my Authority. If He had vilified my Character, or insulted my Person, should I then have been inclined to make the same advantageous Settlement?

*Asp.* Herein appears the infinite Superiority of the divine Bounty. GOD is rich in Mercy, not only to the Obedient and Grateful, but to the Unthankful and Unworthy. *To the LORD our GOD,* says the Prophet, *belong Mercies and Forgivenesses;* in

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Measure superabundant, and in Continuance unwearied. And this, *notwithstanding We have* offended Him, by our manifold Failures in Duty. Nay, have rebelled \* *against him*, by flagrant Violations of his Law.

In sweet Concert with this prophetic Lesson, sings the transported *Psalmist*; *Thou, LORD*, in thy sacred Humanity, *hast ascended up on High*: ascended, from the low Caverns of the Tomb, to the highest Throne in the highest Heavens.—*Thou hast led Captivity captive*: hast abolished Death, that universal Tyrant; and subdued those Powers of Darkness,

\* *Dan. ix. 9.* The Original is מרדנו than which no Expression, in the *Hebrew* Language, bears a more obnoxious Signification. It denotes the most *audacious* and the most *flagitious* Impiety. It denotes that *Rebellion*, which is as the *Sin of Witchcraft*; and that *Stubbornness*, which is as the *Iniquity of Idolatry*. Yet, all virulent and execrable as it is, it does not suppress the Yearnings of divine Pity, nor supersede the Exercise of divine Forgiveness.—With a Word derived from the same Root, *Saul*, when exasperated almost to Madness, upbraids *Jonathan*. And we know, Persons so extremely insensed, never speak in the softest Terms; never touch the Subject with a Feather, but make their Tongue like a sharp Sword.

May I venture to add? That our Translators seem to mistake the proper Application of the afore-mentioned Passage. They represent *Saul's* Invective, flying as wide of the Mark, as it is over-charged with Malice.—*Son of the perverse rebellious Woman!* This might be asserted, without the least Impeachment of *Jonathan's* personal Loyalty.—Besides, is it not excessively indecent, as well as absolutely unreasonable, to reflect upon the Mother, for the Misdemeanours of the Son?—Surely, the Clause should be rendered, in perfect Consistence with the Genius of the Original; *Thou Son of perverse Rebellion*; or, more agreeably to the *English* Idiom, *Thou perverse rebellious Wretch!* 1 Sam. xx. 30.

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ness, which had inflaved the whole World.—Like a glorious *and* triumphant Conqueror, Thou hast also *received Gifts*; not merely for thy own Fruition, but to confer on Others, by way of honorary and enriching Largesse.—What are those Gifts, *Theron*?

*Ther.* The Gifts of the Gospel, I suppose: Pardon of Sin, the Influences of the HOLY SPIRIT, and those other Privileges of *Christianity*; which constitute the present Happiness of Mankind, and prepare them for future Bliss.

*Asp.* You rightly judge.—And for whom were those royal, those heavenly Donatives received? If You have an Inclination to bestow, a Sword set with Diamonds, a finely-wrought Piece of Plate, or an exquisitely finished Picture; what Names present themselves to your Thoughts? What Persons are the Objects of your Choice? The *approved* Friend, or *distinguished* Favourite, I make no Question.—But for *whom* (let me ask again, since it is a Point of the last Importance) were those heavenly Donatives received?

*Ther.* Let me recollect—*Thou receivedst Gifts*—not for fallen Angels, but *for Men*—And not for thy Friends, but for thy *Enemies*—yea, *for the Rebellious* also\*.—Merciful Heaven! What a Word is this! And does it come from the GOD of Truth?—Gifts! Divine Gifts! Gifts of unspeakable Value, and eternal Duration! And these to be conferred on Enemies, on the Rebellious! Wretches, who are destitute of all gracious Qualifications; who deserve not the least Favour; but have Reason to expect the Frowns of Indignation, and the Sword of Vengeance!

S 2

*Asp.*

\* Psal. lxxviii. 18.

*Asp.* Thus it is written, in those sacred Constitutions; which are far more stedfast and unalterable, than the Law of the *Medes* and *Persians*.—Thus it is spoken, by the Mouth of that Almighty BEING; with whom there is no Variableness, nor the least Shadow of Turning.—Let Us not, my dear Friend, by unreasonable Unbelief, frustrate all these Promises, and reject *our own* Mercies. Let us not, by an evil Heart of Unbelief, make GOD a Lyar; and make Ourselves, of all Creatures, most miserable.

But see!—The Clouds, which hung their agreeable Sables, to damp the Ardour, and abate the Glare of Day, are departing. The Sun has been colouring their fleecy Skirts, and spreading over the floating Screen a Variety of interchangeable Hues. Now He begins to edge them with Gold, and shine them into Silver. A sure Indication, that (like the *glittering*, but *transitory* Toys, which they represent) they will soon be swept from the Horizon, and seen no more.—The bright Orb, while We are speaking, bursts the Veil; and, from a voluminous Pomp of parting Clouds, pours a Flood of Splendor over all the Face of Nature.—We shall quickly perceive this open Situation, too hot to consist with Pleasure: and must be obliged to seek for Shelter, in the shady Apartments of the House.

Will you admit me, *Theron*, into those shady Apartments?

*Ther.* Admit You, *Aspasie*!—I am surpris'd at your Question. I thought You had known me better: and am sorry, it should be needful to assure You, that my House is as much your own, as it is mine.

The



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The more freely You command it, the more highly you will oblige me.

*Asp.* May I believe You, *Theron*? Do you speak from your Heart? Or must I conclude, that You, plausibly profess, what You have no Intention to perform?—Would you be pleased, If I should obstinately persist in these dishonourable Suspicions, notwithstanding all your friendly Protestations?

*Ther.* My dear *Aspasio*, I see your Design. I see, and am ashamed. Ashamed to think, that I should fancy myself more punctual in my Professions, than GOD is true to his Word.—*LORD, I believe. Help Thou mine Unbelief!*





## DIALOGUE XVI.



OUR Friends had agreed upon a Visit to *Philenor*. They rode through a fine open, fruitful Country. Which was covered with Crops of ripened Corn; and occupied by several Parties of Rustics, gathering in the copious *Harvest*.

The *Rye*, white and hoary as it were with Age, waved its bearded Billows, and gave a dry husky Rustle before the Breeze.—The *Wheat*, laden with Plenty, and beautifully brown, hung the heavy Head; and invited, by its bending Posture, the Reaper's Hand. Platts of *Barley*, and Acres of *Oats*, stood whitening in the Sun. Upright, and perfectly even, as though the Gardener's Shears had clipped them at the Top, they gratified the Spectator's Eye, and gladdened the Farmer's Heart.—*Beans* partly clad in native Green, partly transformed and tawny with the parching Ray, were preparing the last Employ for the crooked Weapon.—Some of the Grain lay flat, in regular Rows, on the  
the

# DIALOGUE XVI. 279

the new-made Stubble. Some was erected, in graceful Shocks, along the bristly Ridges. Some, conveyed homewards on the loaded Waggon, nodded over the groaning Axle.

The Villages seemed to be empty, and all their Inhabitants poured into the Plains. Here were Persons of each Sex, and of every Age.—The lusty *Youths*, stooping to their Work, plied the Sickle; or swept, with their Scythes, the falling Ranks.—The sprightly *Females* followed, binding the Handfuls into Sheaves, or piling the Swarths into hasty Cocks.—Dispersed up and down were the *Children* of the Needy, glean- ing the scattered Ears, and picking their scanty Harvest. — Nor were the *old* People absent; but crawling into the Sun, or sitting on a shady Emi- nence, they beheld the Toils—the pleasing Toils they once sustained.

This is the most joyful Period of the Country- man's Life; the long expected Crown of all his La- bours. For this, He broke the stubborn Glebe, and manured the impoverished Soil. For this, He bore the sultry Beams of Summer, and shrunk not from the pinching Blasts of Winter. For this, He toiled away the Year, in a Round of ceaseless but willing Activity. Knowing, that *the Husbandman must la- bour, before he partakes of the Fruits* \*.—And will not the

\* 2 Tim. ii. 6. Beza thinks, that in settling the Con- struction of this Verse, the Adverb *τοτε* should be con- nected with the Participle *κομιωμενα*. If so, the Tran- slation exhibited above, may bid fair for Acceptance; and, one of the most celebrated Historians, may have the Honour of commenting on the greatest of the Apostles; *Næ illi falsi sunt, qui diversissimas Res expectant,*  
S 4 *Ignavia,*

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the blessed Hope of everlasting Life ; will not the bright Expectation of consummate Bliss, animate Us with an equally chearful Resolution, both to resist the Temptations, and discharge the Duties of our present State ?

Short seemed the Way, and quick passed the Time, as they traveled through such Scenes of rural Abundance, and rural Delight.—Before they were aware, the Horses stopted at *Philenor's* Seat. Where they found, to their no small Disappointment, that the Master was gone abroad. They alighted however, and took a Walk in the *Gardens*.

The Gardens, at proper Intervals, and in well-chosen Situations, were interspersed with Pieces of *Statuary*. At the Turn of a Corner, You are—not shocked with a naked Gladiator, or a beastly *Priapus*—but agreeably surpris'd with the Image of *Tully*. He is just risen from his Seat; and upon the Point of addressing Himself to some important Oration. A reverential Awe appears in his Countenance ; such as silently acknowledges, that He is going to plead before the Rulers of the World. Sedate, at the same time, and collected in Himself ; He seems conscious of superior Eloquence, and emboldened by the Justice of his Cause. His thoughtful Aspect, and gracefully expanded Arm, speak to the Eye, before the Tongue has uttered a Syllable.

You enter an Alley, lined on either Side with a verdant Fan ; and having no Variety of Objects to diversify

*Ignaviae Voluptatem, & Præmia Virtutis.* SALLUST. *i. e.* They are, beyond all Dispute, most egregiously mistaken, who hope to unite those incompatible Things, the Pleasures of Indolence, and the Rewards of Industry.



diversify the intermediate Space, your View is conducted to a magnificent Building at the End. As you walk along, contemplating the masterly Performance in Architecture, an unexpected Opening diverts your Attention; and presents you with some striking Imitation of virtuous or heroic Life.—Not the *Macedonian* Madman; nor *Sweden's* royal Knight-errant; nor *Cæsar*, infamously renowned for his slaughtered Millions; but the truly gallant *Czar*. A drawn Sword in his Hand, and a commanding majestic Sternness on his Brow. The Weapon is held in the most menacing Posture; and many a Spectator has been observed to start back, with Apprehensions of Fear. It is that gloriously severe Attitude, in which the grateful Citizens of *Narva* beheld Him, and in which all Posterity will admire Him; when He turned upon his own victorious, but ungovernable Troops, and threatened to drench the Dagger in their Hearts, if they did not immediately desist from Rapine \* and Slaughter; immediately allow Quarter to their vanquished Foes.

Under a circular Dome, supported by Pillars of the *Doric* Order, and in a Spot where several Walks center, stands—not the *Venus a Medicis*; corrupting, while it captivates, the World—but a *Spartan* Mother. Her Habit decent and graceful; somewhat like the *Juno Matrona* of the *Romans*; as She is finely depicted in Mr. *Spence's Polymetis*. Her  
Air

\* “ As soon as the Soldiers were Masters of the Town,  
“ (*Narva*) they fell to Plunder, and gave themselves  
“ up to the most enormous Barbarities. The *Czar* ran  
“ from Place to Place, to put a stop to the Disorder and  
“ Massacre. He was even obliged to kill with his own  
“ Hand several *Muscovites*, who did not hearken to his  
“ Orders.”

VOLTAIRE'S *Hist. Charl. XII.*

Air stately and resolved ; expressive of Dignity, yet mingled with Softness. She holds a Shield : is in the Act of delivering it to her Son ; a Youth, setting out for the Army, and going to hazard his Life, in the Defence of his Country. She is supposed to add that spirited and magnanimous Exhortation, which is engraven on the Protuberance of the Buckler—*ἦ ταν, ἦ σπῖ τα;*—*Bring it back, my Son, as thy Trophy ; or, be brought back upon it, as thy Bier.*

I am particularly pleased, said *Theron*, with the Contrivance of this last Ornament. It is regulated by one of the most refined Rules of Art ; not to lavish away all the Beauty at a single View, but to make a skilful Reserve for some future Occasion.—The Dome and the Columns afford Pleasure, when beheld at a considerable Distance. The fine animated Figure in the midst displays its Graces, on a nearer Approach. By which means, the Attention is kept awake, and the Entertainment continues new.

But what I principally admire, is the *Spirit* or *Style* of the Decorations in general. They put me in mind of a very just Remark, which *Mr. Pope* has somewhere made. It is, if I remember right, to this Effect.—“ A Man not only shews his Taste, but his Virtue, in the Choice of his Ornaments. A proper Piece of History, represented in Painting on a rich Man’s Walls, (*or exhibited in Imagery amidst his Gardens*) is very often a better Lesson, than any He could teach by his Conversation. In this Sense, the Stones may be said to speak, when Men cannot, or will not.”—All but the  
compa-

# DIALOGUE XVI. 283

comparative or satyrical Part of the Observation, I would apply to the Prospect before Us, and its worthy Owner.

*Assp.* *Philenor's* Gardens are, I think, more chaste and delicate in their Ornaments, than a certain *collegiate Church*. In the latter Place, We might reasonably expect the strictest Adherence to Purity, if We should not meet with the Symbols of Piety and Incitements to Religion.—What then would be the Reflections of a judicious Observer, if, in such a solemn and venerable Edifice, He should see a huge brawny Fellow stuck-up against the Wall; with his Posteriors half bare; his whole Body more than half naked; and in an Attitude none of the most decent\*.—Excuse me, *Theron*. I confess myself

\* Referring to the Monument, lately erected for MAJOR GENERAL FLEMING, in *Westminster-Abbey*. Where under the General's Bust, are placed *Hercules* and *Pallas*. *Hercules* with his Club and Lion's Skin, in the Manner related above. *Pallas*, with a Mirror and a Serpent at her Side.—The Reader may see a Picture and an Explanation of this Monument, in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for August 1754.

As this Church has been the Burial-place of the most illustrious Personages, for many Centuries; as it is the Place, where *all* our Kings receive their Crowns, and *many* of them deposit their Ashes; as it is singularly eminent for its Antiquities and Monuments; there is a large Resort both of Natives and Foreigners, to view its grand and awful Curiosities. Whatever, therefore, is erected in a Place so circumstanced and so distinguished, should, I apprehend, not only display an Air of *Elegance* in the Execution, but include a *Beauty of Holiness* in the Design. Because, nothing can lay claim to the *το καλον*, which is not possessed of the *το ωρεπον*. Nor can any Performances, thus situated, be pronounced truly graceful,

self ashamed even to rehearse the Description. How then can the Spectacle itself become the House of Divine Worship?

*Ther.* But perhaps this same brawny Fellow may represent a *Heathen* Demigod; one of the *Idols* worshiped by Antiquity; the tutelary Deity of Valour.

*Asp.* And will this justify the Practice? Does not this add Profaneness to Immodesty? Are We *Christians* to thank *Hercules* for the Valour of our Warriors, and make our Acknowledgments to *Pallas* for the Conduct of our Generals? Shall We *Christians* behold with Admiration, or recognize as our Benefactors, what the Apostle has stigmatized under the Character of *Devils* \* ?

If HE, who overthrew the Tables of the Money-changers, had taken a Walk in these famous Cloysters, I am apt to suspect, He would have paid no very agreeable Compliment to this fine Piece of Statuary. *Take these Things hence*, would probably have been his Command; and, *make not the Precincts of your Temple a Chamber of Pagan Imagery*, his Rebuke †.—Neither is it at all unlikely, that the Image itself, notwithstanding its inimitable Workmanship, might have shared the Fate of its Kinsman *Dagon*;

—————*When*

graceful, but such only as correspond with the Character, and subserve the Design of the sacred Edifice. It was thought, by a very able Critic and a very candid Writer, that mere *Impropriety* of Taste, in ornamenting one of the Monuments, called for his Censure. Surely then a Violation of *Decency*, and an Approach to *Paganism*, call more loudly for public Animadversion, and proper Reformation. See *Spect.* Vol. I. N<sup>o</sup> 26.

\* 1 Cor. x. 20.

† John ii. 16,



—————*When the captive Ark*  
*Maim'd his brute Image, Head and Hands lopp'd off*  
*In his own Temple, on the Groundsell Edge*  
*When He fell flat, and sham'd his Worshippers \*.*

*Ther.* But how should the Artist represent the great Atchievements and the shining Qualities of his Hero, if You will not allow Him to make use of these *significant* Emblems?

*Asp.* I question, whether they are so very significant. The Mirror seems to characterize a Fop, rather than a Soldier. It leads Us to think of a soft *Narcissus*, admiring Himself; rather than a sagacious General, planning the Operations of the Campaign.—Besides; is sacred Literature so destitute of proper Emblems, that We must borrow the Decorations of our Churches and the Trophies of our Conquerors, from the Dreams of Superstition or the Delusions of Idolatry? How just and expressive are those emblematical Representations, exhibited in *Ezekiel's* Vision! Where Activity and Speed are signified, by *Hands* in Conjunction with *Wings*; and the deep, the complicated, yet ever harmonious Schemes of Providence, by a *Wheel in the Middle of a Wheel*. With what Propriety and Force are the noblest Endowments pictured, in the Revelations of *St. John*, and their grand Machinery! Superior Wisdom and Benevolence of Heart, are described by the Face of a *Man*; Strength of Mind and Intrepidity of Spirit, by the Visage of a *Lion*; Calmness of Temper and indefatigable Application,

by

\* MILTON, B. I. 458.

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by the Features of an *Ox*; a penetrating Discernment, and an expeditious Habit of acting, by the Form of a *flying Eagle* \*.

These Hieroglyphics are graceful, are pertinent, and such as every Spectator will understand. Whereas, the Devices of our new monumental Encomium are, I presume, to the Unlearned hardly intelligible; to the Serious, little better than profane; and to every Beholder, indelicate if not immodest.—*Philenor*, I imagine, would blush to admit them into his Walks or Avenues. And I am sorry to find them received into the most antient †, most renowned, and most frequented Church in the Kingdom.

Talking in this Manner, they come to a curious Grave, formed on that uncommon Plan, proposed by Mr. *Addison*, in one of his *Spectators*.—It consisted wholly of *Evergreens*. *Firs*, clad in verdant Silver, pointed their resinous Leaves, and shot aloft their towering Cones. *Laurels* arrayed in glossy Green, spread their ample Foliage, and threw abroad their rambling Boughs.—*Bay-trees* were expanded into a Fan, that no Weather could tarnish; or rounded into a Column, that knew not how to moulder.

\* Rev. iv. 7.

† Some Antiquarians trace back the Origin of this Church, even to the Reign of *Lucius*. Which is more than the Space of 1500 Years. Others suppose, that *Sebert*, King of the *East-Saxons*, about the Year of our LORD 605, built the first religious Structure on this Spot. All agree, that it was re-edified and enlarged by *Edward the Confessor*; and that the present stately and magnificent Fabric, was founded by *Henry III*.

moulder. While the *Laurustinus* ran out into a beautiful Irregularity of Shape; and compacted her reddening Gems, in order to unfold her whitening Bloom.—In one Place lay a Dale, gently sinking, and coated with the *Chamomile's* natural Frieze; which never changes its Colour, never loses it Gloss. Near it, and scooped, You would imagine, from the same Hollow, arose a Mount, softly swelling, and shagged with *Furze*; gay with perennial Verdure, and generally decked with golden Blossoms.—Here, You are led through a serpentine Walk, and Hedges of *Box*; and find, perhaps, a solitary Pyramid or a capacious Urn, each composed of unfading *Yew*. There You look through a strait Alley, fenced on either Side, and arched over Head, with mantling *Philirea*; and see, at the Extremitie, an Obelisk sheathed in *Ivy*, and ornamented with its sable Clusters, as with Wreaths of living Sculpture.—Scattered up and down, were several Sorts of *Holly*; some striped with White; some spotted with Yellow; some preparing to brighten and beautify the Scene, with Berries of glowing Scarlet.

The Heads of the Trees, arising one above another, in a gradual Slope, from the diminutive Mazerean to the lofty Cypress; the several Shadings of their green Attire, greatly diversified, and judiciously intermixed; afford, especially in the Winter-season, a most *inlivened* and *lovely* Prospect.—As the Sunshine is, by the Frequenters of this Grove, usually more coveted than the Shade; it is so disposed, as to admit, in one Part or another, every Gleam of fine Weather, which exhilarates the Winter.

*Asp.*

*Asp.* There must be something unspeakably pleasing in a Plantation, which appears lively and fruitful, when all its Neighbours of the wood-land Race, are barren, bleak, or dead. But, how much more chearing and delightful must it be; when *decrepit* Age, or bodily Infirmities, have impaired the Vigour, and laid waste the Gratifications of our youthful Prime; to find a solid *undecaying* Pleasure, in the Favour of GOD, and the Hope of Glory!—Now indeed the feathered Tribes resort to the more flowing Umbrage of the Poplar and the Ash. But amidst *December's* Cold, You shall observe them forsaking the *leafless* Woods, and flocking to this friendly Receptacle; hopping across the sunny Walks, or sheltering themselves, in the wet and stormy Day, under these *trusty* Boughs. So, the many thoughtless Creatures, who turn their Back upon Religion, amidst the soft and soothing Caresses of Prosperity; will want, extremely want, its *sovereign Supports*, under the sharp and distressing Assaults of Adversity, Sickness, and Death.—This Collection, it is true, may not equal the Groves of annual Verdure, in Floridity of Dress; but it far exceeds them, in the Duration of its Ornaments. Ere long, yonder shewy Branches will be stript of their Holiday Clothes: whereas, *these* will retain their Honours, when *those* are all Rags or Nakedness. Thus will it be with every Refuge for our poor, imperfect, sinful Souls; excepting only the Righteousness of our LORD JESUS CHRIST. Every Thing else will *fade as a Leaf*\*. This, my *Theron*, and this alone is an *Evergreen*: always free for our Acceptance, and always effectual to save.

*Ther.*

\* Isa. lxiv. 6.



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*Ther.* An Evergreen it is. But, like the ruddy and inviting Fruits, which hang on the uppermost Boughs of those lofty Trees in the Orchard, it seems to be quite out of my Reach.

*Asp.* Are You sensible, That You *need* the immaculate and perfect Righteousness of our SAVIOUR?

*Ther.* Was *Jonah* sensible, how much He needed the cooling Shelter of his Gourd; when the Sun smote fiercely upon his Temples, and all the Fervours of the fiery East were glowing around Him? —So is your *Theron* sensible, that, without a far better Righteousness than his own, He must inevitably be condemned by the Sentence of the Law, and cannot possibly stand before the high and holy GOD.

*Asp.* Remember then, what our LORD says to such Persons; *Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give You Rest* \*. How gracious is the Invitation? Come unto ME, the Father of Compassions, and the Giver of every good Gift.—How extensive as well as gracious! All that are weary †, toiling in a fruitless Pursuit of Happiness, and spending your Labour for that which satisfieth not. All that are *heavy laden* ‡, oppressed with the Servitude of Sin, or bowed down under a Load of Misery.—These, *all* these are called; and *You*, my Friend, in the Number.—They have not a Ticket, a Bond, or some inferior Pledge, to ascertain their Success; but they have a Promise from Faithfulness and Truth itself. *I will give you Rest*, says

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\* Matt. xi. 28.

† Κοπιωτης.

† Πεφοβησμενοι.

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the Strength of Israel; whose Will is Fate, and his Word the Basis of the Universe.—And if *CHRIST* will give You Rest; He will wash You in that Blood, which atones; and invest You with that Righteousness, which justifies. Since nothing short of these Mercies, can afford any Satisfaction to the guilty Conscience, or *true* Satisfaction to the restless Soul.—Permit me to ask farther; Do You earnestly *desire* this Righteousness?

*Ther.* Will yonder *Hirelings*, when fatigued with the Heat and Burden of a long, laborious, sultry Day, desire the Shades of the Evening, and the Repose of the Night?—I can truly, on this Occasion, adopt the Words of the Prophet; *The Desire of my Soul is to thy Name*, Blessed JESUS, and to the Remembrance of thy Righteousness. The very Mention of this spotless Righteousness is Music to my Ears. Every fresh, though distant Discovery of it, gleams Pleasure upon my Mind. And that would be a welcome Day, a Day greatly to be distinguished, which should bring it *near* to my View, and *home* to my Soul.

*Asp.* Say not then, my dear Friend, that *CHRIST*, and the Blessings of his Purchase, are beyond your Reach. They are now, even now at your Door. You need not argue, anxiously and despondingly; *Who shall ascend into Heaven, to bring down CHRIST from above? Or, who shall descend into the Deep, to bring up CHRIST from beneath\*?* There is no such Impossibility, no such Difficulty in the Thing. *CHRIST* and his Righteousness, *CHRIST* and his Salvation, are brought nigh in the Word of Promise.

\* Rom. x. 6, 7.

## DIALOGUE XVI. 291

mise. And if thou shalt confess with thy Mouth the **LORD JESUS**, as dying on the Cross for thy Redemption: if thou shalt believe in thy Heart, that **GOD** hath raised Him from the Dead for thy Justification, thou shalt be saved\*. In so doing, thou shalt receive Remission of Sin; and Power to withstand its Temptations.

Have You never, in your Travels, been overtaken by the dark and tempestuous Night? When, chilled with the Cold; and almost drowned in the Rain, You arrived at the House of some valued Friend, was You not willing to gain Admittance?

*Ther.* Willing! I was desirous; I was almost impatient; I thought every Moment an Hour; till the hospitable Door opened: till I exchanged the dismal Gloom and the driving Storm, for the chearful Light and the amiable Company within.

*Asp.* The adored **EMMANUEL** professes Himself equally willing to come unto You. Behold! says the **SAVIOUR** of the World, *I stand at the Door, and knock. If any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in unto Him, and will sup with Him, and He with ME* †.—Like one exposed to all the Inclemencies of the Air, whose Head is filled with Dew, and his Locks with the Drops of the Night ‡, He is not only willing, but desirous to enter.—He stands at the Door, with great Long-suffering and Perseverance; till all Obstacles are removed, or rather till that one grand Obstacle is taken out of the Way, Unbelief.—He knocks, by the Preaching of his Word, and the Promise of his Gospel; like One

T 2

who

\* Rom. x. 9.

† Rev. iii. 20.

‡ Cant. v. 2.

who solicits Admission, and will take no Denial.—Hear then his soliciting Voice, and *He will sup with You*; will make his Abode with You, will manifest his Glories in You, and communicate his Grace to You. Believe his promising Word, and *You shall sup with Him*; this will be refreshing to your distressed Soul, as the most sumptuous Banquet to the famished Stomach and craving Appetite.

*Ther.* I cannot open my Heart.

*Asp.* *CHRIST* has the Key of *David*. *He openeth, and None can shut; He shuteth, and None can open*\*.—HE is able to make all Grace, not only to exist in You, but *abound* towards You†.—And, what is still more encouraging, He is professedly the *Author* and *Finisher* of our Faith‡. Since He has claimed this Character to Himself, since He has undertaken to execute this Office, why should We harbour the least Distrust? Will HE not fulfil his own Office, and act agreeably to his own Character?—Be not, my dear *Theron*, be not faithless, but believing.

*Ther.* This I believe—That I am a lost Sinner; under the Curse of the Law, and liable to the Wrath of GOD. That there is no Relief for my Distress, but in *CHRIST* and his transcendent Merits. HE, and HE *alone*, is able to save me from my Guilt, and all its dismal Train of Miseries. He is a SAVIOUR fully proportioned to my Wants; exactly suited to my several Necessities.—I believe, and am persuaded, That, if I was interested in the Divine *JESUS*, my Soul should live.

*Asp.*

\* Rev. iii. 7.

† 2 Cor. ix. 8.

‡ Heb. xii. 2.



*Asp.* Be persuaded likewise, That there is no clogging Qualification, no Worth to be possessed, no Duty to be performed, in order to your full Participation of *CHRIST* and his Riches. Only believe, and they are all your own. *CHRIST dwelleth in our Hearts*—How? By legal Works, and laborious Prerequisites? No; but *by Faith* \*. *He that believeth on the SON, hath*—a chimerical? far from it; a real and a substantial Happiness; even *everlasting Life* †.

*Ther.* Ah! my *Aspasio*! I cannot believe. I feel my Impotency. My Mind is, as You formerly hinted, like the withered Arm.

*Asp.* It is no small Advantage, *Theron*, to be convinced of our Inability in this Respect. This is, if not the Beginning of Faith, the Sign of its Approach; and shews it to be, if not in the Soul, yet at the very Door.—Fear not, my Friend. He who bids You stretch out, will strengthen the withered Arm. He first makes Us sensible of our Weakness, and then *fulfills all the good Pleasure of his Will, and the Work of Faith with Power* ‡.

Can You doubt of his Willingness? Then go to Mount Calvary. *There listen to the Sounding of his Bowels, and of his Mercies towards You* §. Has not every Drop of Blood a Tongue? Cannot You read a Language in each streaming Wound, and hear a Voice in every dying Pang?—Do they not all speak his infinite Love even to wretched Sinners? Do they not all address You with that tender Remonstrance, *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore dost thou doubt* §?

T 3

Nay;

\* Eph. iii. 17.  
|| Isa. lxiii. 15.

† John iii. 36. ‡ 2 Thess. i. 11.  
§ Matt. xiv. 31.

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Nay ; do they not all declare, with an Energy superior to the Force of Words, That he will deny You no Manner of thing that is good ?

*Who gave his Blood, what Gift will he with-hold !*

*Ther.* I am ashamed to recollect, what mistaken Notions I once entertained, concerning the *Easiness* of Believing. As though it were to be performed, like the Act of rising from our Seat, or stepping into a Coach, by our own Strength, and at our own Time. What a Stranger was I then, to the Blindness of my Understanding, and the Hardness of my Heart ; to my Bondage under Unbelief, and Averseness to the Way of Salvation by *Grace through Faith !*

*Ass.* Since you are sensible of your Impotence, beware of the *contrary* Extreme. Because You cannot, by your own Strength, exercise Faith, let not this occasion a tame Resignation of Yourself to Infidelity. You must endeavour, diligently endeavour, to believe ; and wait, and pray, for the Divine SPIRIT. Though it is his Office to testify of *GHRIST*, and bring near the *REDEEMER's* Righteousness \* : Yet his Influences are not to supersede, but to encourage our own Efforts.—*Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling ;* here is our Duty. *For it is GOD that worketh in you both to will and to do † ;* here is our Encouragement. And O ! what a glorious Encouragement, to have the Arm of Omnipotence stretched out, for our Support and our Succour !

*Ther.* How, or in what Manner, does the Divine SPIRIT work Faith in the Heart of a Sinner ?

You

\* Isa. xlv. 1.

† Phil. ii. 12, 13.

You wonder, perhaps, that I ask such a Question. But my Apprehensions are strangely dull, and my Views very dim, with regard to spiritual Things. If, in this Respect, I have any Sight, it is like his, who *saw Men as Trees walking*; saw these several Objects, but so obscurely, so confusedly, that He could not distinguish one from the other, only by the Circumstance of Motion.

*Asp.* The most enlightened Minds see only in part; and all have Reason, to make the blind Beggar's Supplication, their own Request; *LORD, that I may receive my Sight!*—The Operation of the Holy SPIRIT in producing Faith, is thus described by a Master in *Israel*; “The Divine SPIRIT brings CHRIST and his Righteousness nigh unto Us in the Promise of the Gospel; clearing at the same Time our Right and War-rant to intermeddle with all, without Fear of vicious Intromission; encouraging and enabling to a Measure of confident Application, and taking Home all to Ourselves, freely, without Money, and without Price.”

You was once, *Theron*, a zealous Advocate for good Works. Now You seem to have abandoned your Clients. Remember, my dear Friend, what our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* says; *This is the Work of GOD*, of all Works most acceptable and most honourable to the Divine MAJESTY, *that You believe on Him, whom He hath sent* \*.

*Ther.* The true Belief, according to your Notion, *Aspasio*, is so refined and exalted a Virtue,

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that

\* John vi. 29.

that I very much question, whether I shall ever be able to attain it.

*Asp.* If you are unable to attain it, is the LORD unable to give it? *Our Sufficiency* for this and every good Work, is not in Ourselves, but in GOD.—And to Him Difficulties are easy. Before Him Mountains are a Plain.—You will please to remember, that Sinners are said to *believe*, not through their own Ability, but through the Power of *Grace*. And you will permit me to ask, How you became acquainted with *my* Notion of Faith!

*Ther.* I am not so inattentive a Reader of your Letters, as to forget your Definition of this momentous Article. *Faith*, you say, is “A real Persuasion \*, that the blessed JESUS has shed his Blood for me, and fulfilled all Righteousness in my Stead: that, through this great Atonement and glorious Obedience, He has purchased even for my sinful Soul, Reconciliation with GOD, sanctifying Grace, and all spiritual Blessings †.”

*Asp.*

\* *Budeus* and *Stephens* derive the original Word from *πεινῶμαι*, He is persuaded: and, I think, very properly; for, whatever We believe, of that We have a real Persuasion.—The latter most accurate and masterly Critic gives this Interpretation of *πεινῶμαι*. *Persuasio certa, quam in nobis efficit Spiritus Sanctus, de Salute in Christo promissā, quam sibi quisque credendo applicat.* To corroborate which Exposition, He adds; *Hac etiam in Significatione Nomen Fidei a Theologis Latinis receptum fuit.*

† See *Letter X.* Here is, it must be acknowledged, a total Omission of all *preparatory* or rather *impulsive* Dispositions; such as Conviction of Sin, and Hungering after Salvation.—Here is likewise a total Silence concerning all Causes, *instrumental* or *efficient*, such as the Power of the Divine WORD, and the Agency of the Divine SPIRIT.—No Mention is made of the *Fruits* or *Concomitants*;



*Asp.* I am obliged to you, *Theron*, for the Honour You do my Letter ; and I hope, You will pay an equal Regard to the Determination of our Church. You once apprehended, that my Attachment to the Church of *England* was unsettled and wavering. Judge now, who has most thoroughly imbibed her Doctrines, and is most invariably tenacious of her true Interests.—In the first Part of the Homily concerning the Sacrament, We have this Definition of Faith ; “ It is a Belief, not only “ that the Death of *CHRIST* is available for “ the Remission of Sins, and Reconciliation with “ *GOD*, but also that He made a full and sufficient Sacrifice *for thee*, a perfect Cleansing *for thy* “ Sins \*.”

My Notion of Faith, You see, is evidently the Voice of the Establishment ; and, I think it gives Us a *clear intelligible* Sense, suited to the most common Acceptation of the Word. Such as would naturally arise in the Mind of a Stranger, who, without any Bias on his Judgment, should inquire into the Purport of our Religion, or consider the Language of our Bible.

*Ther.* How suited to the most *common Acceptation* of the Word ?

*Asp.*

*comitants* ; such as Love to *CHRIST*, Love of the Brethren, or Purity of Heart.—Nothing is exhibited to View, but the Form and Essence of Faith ; or that particular Act, which *characterizes* and *constitutes* real Faith ; which distinguishes it from the hypocritical Pretension, and the historical Notion.—This simple View is given, that the Mind may fix upon the grand Point, and not be embarrassed with a Multiplicity of Ideas.

\* Answerable to this, was the Doctrine of the *primitive Church* ; *Η τῆς ἰδιότητος τοῦ Θεοῦ*. CHRYSOST.

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*Asp.* When You sent a Message to your Tenant—who, in his last Sickness, expressed so much Uneasiness on account of his numerous Family, and embarrassed Circumstances—assuring Him, that you had canceled the Bond, and forgiven his Debt. When You told the poor Woman—whose Husband fell from the loaded Waggon, and broke both his Legs—that you would order a Surgeon to attend Him, and would continue his weekly Pay. *How* did they regard, *how* receive your promised Kindness? So let Us credit the gracious Declarations of our GOD; so accept his faithful Promise; and then we shall answer the Import of the Word—then we shall truly believe.

*Ther.* Where is there, in Scripture, any Thing parallel or similar to these Instances?

*Asp.* Have You never read the Words of *Micah*; *Who is a GOD like unto Thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by Transgression* \*? Here is the gracious Declaration.—*He will turn again; He will have Compassion upon Us; He will subdue our Iniquities* †. Here is the faithful Promise.—And why my Friend, why should We pay less Credit to the ever living JEHOVAH, than to a Man “whose Breath is “in his Nostrils?” Is there Treachery with the HOLY ONE of *Israel*? Does the LORD make, and then violate his Promise? “Ask now of the Days “that are past, ask from the one Side of Heaven “unto the other, whether such a Thing hath ever “been?”

*Ther.* GOD has never violated his Promise, when it was expressly made, and particularly applied.

\* Mic. vii. 18:

† Mic. vii. 19.

plied. But, in this Circumstance, there is a wide Difference between the Case of your Friend, and the Case of his poor People. I *named* the Object of my Compassion in one of the Instances, and made a *personal* Application in the other. Neither of which is done in the Scriptures.

*Asp.* Though We are not particularly named, yet We are very exactly described, by our *Family*, our *Inclination*, our *Practice*.—What says eternal Wisdom, when she makes a Tender of her inestimable Blessings? *To You, O Men*, not to fallen Angels, *I call*; and my *Voice* is, not to this Man or that Man exclusively, but *to the Sons of Men* indefinitely \*.—What says the holy Apostle, when He publishes the Counsels of Heaven? *This is a faithful Saying, and worthy of all Acceptation, that CHRIST JESUS came into the World to save*—the Upright? the Unblameable? Was this the Case, our Hopes would be covered with a Cloud; or rather, totally and finally eclipsed. But see! they are clear as the Light, and conspicuous as the Noon-Day. For He came (cheering, charming Word!) He came to save *Sinners* †.

Consonant to all which, is the Declaration of another sacred Envoy. *He*, the PRINCE of Peace, the MONARCH of the Universe, *suffered*—for whom? They, in whose Behalf this matchless Ransom was paid, must have an undeniable Right, to look upon Redemption as their own. And blessed, for ever blessed be GOD, it is most peremptorily said, He suffered *for the Unjust* ‡.

That

\* Prov. viii. 4: † 1 Tim. i. 15. ‡ 1 Pet. iii. 18.

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That no Part of our Character might be omitted, and no Sort of our Misery pass unrelieved, it is farther declared; *When We were without Strength, CHRIST died for the Ungodly\**. When We were ungodly, and considered only as ungodly Creatures; neither possessed of any Thing amiable, nor having the least Ability to acquire it; nay, when We were chargeable with horrid Guilt, and incapable of expiating a single Offence; then, even then *CHRIST* died, and for such abominable Wretches he died.—Are We not of the *human* Family? Are We not *unjust* † towards our Fellow-creatures, and *ungodly* towards our great CREATOR? Are We not, in all Relations and in every Respect, *Sinners*? If We are (and upon these Questions, Incredulity itself will scarcely demur) let Us not frowardly reject, rather let Us thankfully receive those spiritual Treasures, which, by virtue of the afore-cited Conveyance, belong to *such* People: which, by several other Clauses in the Will and Testament of our crucified LORD, evidently devolve to *such* Persons.

*Ther.* Is it possible, *Aspasio*? Can We be warranted and encouraged to receive these Treasures, in a Capacity and under a Denomination, which I should think more likely to exclude Us; disinherit Us; and overthrow all our Pretensions?

*Asp.* This may seem strange, but it is true. All the Blessings of the Gospel proceed upon a Supposition of Sinfulness. *CHRIST* is made *Wisdom* unto his People; but what Occasion for the Accession

\* Rom v. 6.

† He is unjust towards his Neighbour, who neglects to love his Neighbour as *himself*. And if this is the Standard, who has not fallen short?



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sion of Wisdom, unless it be in the Case of Ignorance and Folly? *CHRIST* is made *Righteousness*; but who can stand in need of a justifying Righteousness, if they are not in themselves unprofitable and guilty? *CHRIST* is made *Sanctification*; and does not this imply a State of Corruption to be remedied, a Body of Sin to be destroyed? *CHRIST* is made *Redemption*; and from what are Persons redeemed, but from Chains and Bondage, from Misery and Ruin, from all Manner of Evil?

It is also a most precious and invaluable Truth. Such as I would hold fast, and never, never let go. When I search for my own Endowments, I find nothing that I dare venture to plead. Being, in my best Moments, and amidst my choicest Duties, a Sinner. As this is, at all times, my undoubted Character, I have at all times, an undoubted Warrant to say, The Uncreated WISDOM *callet*h me: the Blessed *JESUS* came to *save me*: the Great MESSIAH suffered Death *for me*:

Let me illustrate the Point.—*Romulus*, You know, the Founder of the *Roman* Empire, was a poor Prince: had but a Handful of Subjects, and very scanty Territories. What Expedient could He devise, to enlarge the Boundaries of the one, and augment the Number of the other? He issued a Proclamation, addressed to Outlaws and Criminals; all that were involved in Debt, or obnoxious to Punishment. Promising, that as many as would settle under his Dominion, should be secured from Prosecution, and vested with considerable Privileges.—We will suppose a Person in those distressed Circumstances. Upon hearing the welcome Invitation, He hangs down his Head, and with a dejected Air, cries;

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cries; "I am a *Debtor*, I am a *Criminal*, and  
 "therefore unworthy of the royal Protection."  
 What Answer should be made to such a dispirited  
 Complainer? Make the same to Yourself, whenever  
 You are inclined to renew the present Objections.  
 —Remembering, that the infinite and eternal SO-  
 VEREIGN, to display the Magnificence of his  
 Majesty, and manifest the Riches of his Goodness,  
 has commissioned his Ambassadors to publish in  
 every Nation under Heaven—"That all unhappy  
 "Sinners, who are *oppressed* by the Devil and liable  
 "to Damnation, may come to *CHRIST*, and  
 "rely on *CHRIST*. May, in this Manner, ob-  
 "tain Pardon, Righteousness, and all the Privileges  
 "of Children."

*Ther.* At this rate, the *vilest Miscreants* have as  
 clear, nay have the very same Warrant to believe in  
*CHRIST*, and receive his Salvation, as the highest  
 Saints.

*Assp.* The very same. In this Respect there is no  
 Difference. All have sinned, and must sue for spi-  
 ritual Blessings, not as deserving, but as *guilty* Crea-  
 tures; must receive them, not as the Recompence  
 of their own Worth, but as the Issues of infinite  
 Mercy.—The vilest Miscreants are blinded by the  
 Devil, and enslaved to their Lusts. Therefore they  
 see no Beauty in a SAVIOUR, that they should  
 desire Him. Whereas, when the Divine SPIRIT  
 opens their Eyes, and inclines their Hearts, they dis-  
 cover and make use of just the same Right to  
*CHRIST* and his Merit, as the highest Saints.  
 A Right founded, not on their awakened Desires,

not

## DIALOGUE XVI. 303

not on any thing in themselves, but purely, solely, entirely on the free Grant of a SAVIOUR.

Should You ask the highest Saints, On what their Hopes are grounded? This, or something to this Effect, would be their Reply—"On the free Exhibition of *CHRIST* and his Salvation, recorded in the Word of Truth. There We find it written, *To You*, though Gentiles and Idolaters, is *preached the Remission of Sins* \*.—*The Promise is to You*, even to *You*, whose wicked Hands have crucified and slain the *LORD of Life*; and not to you only, but to all that are afar off, even as many as the *LORD our GOD*, by the Message of his everlasting Gospel, shall call †.—We remember, *Theron*, though You seem to have forgotten, the wretched Outcast, polluted in its Blood, yet accepted by the *HOLY ONE of Israel*. We remember the heavenly Gifts, received by the triumphant *REDEEMER*, for Enemies, and for the *Rebellious*. Nor can we easily forget the Promise of Forgiveness which was made, and the Blessing of Forgiveness which was vouchsafed, even to the *Murderers of the LORD of Glory* ‡.

*Ther.*

\* Acts xiii. 38.

† Acts ii. 39.

‡ Acts ii. 39. *Call*—in the same Manner, as He called Those, to whom *Peter* spake. Which evidently means, not the inward efficacious Call, wrought by the *SPIRIT*; but the outward Call, delivered in the Word. Otherwise, We must suppose every individual Person, in this promiscuous Assembly, to be savingly changed. Which will hardly be credited by Those, who remember, that the Congregation consisted of Mockers, Murderers, and Sinners.

\* Referring to *Dialogue XV.*

*Ther.* This is a pleasing Supposition. But it would be more satisfactory, if You should produce any of the Saints speaking in this Manner?

*Asp.* *Isaiah*, You will allow, was a Saint of no inferior Rank. Yet He breathes the Spirit I am describing, and acts the Part I am vindicating. Turn to that Epitome of the Gospel, his *fifty-third* Chapter. There You may observe Him, claiming a Share in the greatest of all Privileges, Salvation through the Blood of *CHRIST*. How does He advance and maintain his Claim? Not in the Capacity of a *sanctified*, but under the Character of a *sinful* Person. These are his Words; *The LORD hath laid on him, on his Son CHRIST JESUS, the Iniquity of Us all* \*. Of me, and of my Brethren in Piety, does He mean? No; but of me, and of my Fellow-transgressors. This is evidently implied in the Clause I have quoted. In the preceding Part of the Verse, the Prophet explains Himself, and leaves no Room for Hesitation. *All We, like Sheep, have gone astray; We have turned every One to his own Ways; yet our Transgressions, our Iniquities, the GOD of all Mercy has transferred from us, and charged upon our REDEEMER.*—As the vilest Miscreants are indispensibly obliged to confess the former, they have a free and full Right to profess, to assert, and to believe the latter.

At this You may probably wonder: at this We ought all to wonder: this is that amazingly rich Grace, which will be the Wonder of Saints and Angels through a boundless Eternity.—Yet, though We wonder, let us not murmur. Let not the

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\* *Isa.* liii. 6.



elder Brother repine, because the young Prodigal enters at the same Door, and is admitted to the same Table with Himself.

To this Testimony of the Saints, shall I add the Decision of their King? *GOD so loved the World, even the fallen, the wicked, the apostate World; that, in the Fulness of Time, He gave his only begotten SON\**, to bring in a perfect Righteousness, and obtain eternal Redemption. And He still gives Him, with all his saving Benefits, in the Promise of the Gospel.

*Ther.* Does this general Gift warrant a Sinner, to make a particular Application of all to Himself?

*Asp.* It warrants, it demands, and in other Instances obtains, a particular Application. When *Jonah*, in pursuance of the divine Command, *cried and said, Yet forty Days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.* Here was no particular Mention of Man, Woman, or Child. Neither the King, nor the Nobles, nor the Commons were specified. Much less was each and every Inhabitant threatened by Name. Nevertheless, this general Denunciation alarmed them all; was influential on them all. Insomuch that *the People of Nineveh believed GOD, and proclaimed a Fast, and put on Sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least* †.—*They believed*; hence We learn the true Nature of Believing; “*GOD speaks to me*; and what he speaks, He will perform;” is its genuine Profession. Hence We likewise discover, *who they are which ought in this Manner to apply the general Word; all, from the least even unto the greatest, believed.*

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*Ther.*

\* John iii. 16.

† Jonah iii. 5.

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*Ther.* The Case is not parallel, *Aspasio*. This was a Denunciation of Vengeance, not a Promise of Grace.

*Asp.* And can You suppose, that GOD is more liberal of Vengeance, than He is communicative of Grace? Vengeance is his strange Work, but in Mercy and Loving-kindness He delighteth.—Are We bound to believe and apply his dreadful Threatenings? Not allowed to believe and apply his precious Promises? Surely, the LORD's Ways are not so unequal.—When the Law says, *Cursed is every One, that continueth not in all Things\**; should not every Hearer take this to Himself, and submit to the Sentence of just Condemnation? When the Gospel says, *HE came to save that which is lost†*; should not every Hearer take this also to himself, and embrace the Tender of free Salvation?

However, if You dislike my Instance, I will give You another; which is not of the vindictive, but of the beneficent Kind.—When the *Manna* made its first Appearance in the Wilderness; when the *Israelites* knew, neither what it was, nor for whom intended; both these Particulars were explained by *Moses*. *This is the Bread which the LORD hath given You to eat‡*. No Mention is made of any individual Person. Yet the whole Congregation, looked upon this as an undoubted Permission, both for themselves and their Children, to gather, to fetch home, and to use the miraculous Food.—And here *Theron*, here lies the principal Difference between the vile Miscreant, and the exalted Saint; not that the one was Originally better than the Other; not that

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\* Gal. iii. 10. † Matt. xviii. 11. ‡ Exod. xvi. 15.

the One has a clearer Grant of *CHRIST* than the Other; but the latter has gathered the heavenly Manna, and uses it to his unspeakable Advantage. Whereas, it lies round about the Tents of the former; and whoever will, may take, may eat, and his Soul shall live.

*Ther.* GOD gave the *Manna* to all the *Israelites*, both good and bad. But does He give *CHRIST* with this unlimited Freeness?

*Ass.* Our LORD Himself, alluding to this very Miracle, vouchsafes You an Answer. *My FATHER giveth You the true Bread from Heaven\**. My FATHER giveth You his incarnate SON, and his divinely excellent Righteousness. These are Bread indeed; Bread, which came down from the Regions of Heaven; and Bread, which nourisheth the Soul for the Joys of Heaven.—This my FATHER giveth You; though not in actual Possession, yet in Right to possess. This He giveth You, in the free indefinite Grant of his Word: without which Grant, any Attempt to possess, even in the most upright of Men, would be illegal and presumptuous: by virtue of which Grant, even the poor Sinner has an unquestionable Warrant to receive and possess the Riches of *CHRIST*.

*Ther. Unquestionable!* Is not this Expression too peremptory? That such a Grant should be made to *Believers*, I can easily conceive. But is it made to Sinners—to any Sinners—to the most abandoned Sinners?

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*Ass.*

\* John vi. 32.

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*Asp.* Yes, *Theron*, to Sinners. And when Sinners receive the Grant, then they commence Believers. — Was it made to Believers only, no Man living would inherit the Blessing. Because all Men are, by the Depravity and Impotence of their Nature, originally concluded under Sin and Unbelief.

What said our LORD? My Father giveth *You*; that is, the People who stood around, and heard his gracious Voice. Many of whom were in a carnal State habitually, and even then were in a murmuring wicked Frame\*. — What says his Prophet? To *Us* a Son is given: not to *Us*, who were antecedently Children of the Light; but who *walked in Darkness, and dwelt in the Shadow of Death*†. — What saith GOD the LORD? He that created the Heavens, and stretched them out? *I will give Thee*, meaning his beloved SON, *for a Covenant*; it is not said, of Believers, but *of the People*; it is not said, of new Creatures, but *of the Gentiles*. Who were the vilest of all Creatures, or, as *You* have properly spoke, the most abandoned Sinners. — That *We* may understand more clearly the Signification of these Terms, and see the true Extent of this Gift, it is added; *I will give Thee to open the blind Eyes, and to bring out the Prisoners from the Prison*‡. Miserable and guilty Wretches, blinded by the Devil, and enslaved to their Lusts; these are the Patentees in the heavenly Grant. To these the great SURETY is given, together with all the Benefits of his Covenant.

Here then the Grant and the Gift are mentioned; the Persons, for whom they are designed, are specified,

\* John vi. 25, 41. † Isa. ix. 2, 6. ‡ Isa. xlii. 6, 7.



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fied, and expressly named. They are Sinners; *blinded* and *enslaved* Sinners; or, if there be any other more obnoxious Sort, they are all comprehended in this one Word, *Gentiles*. Only allow these Texts to be true; only allow the divine Speaker to be sincere and faithful; then We may boldly affirm; That *any*, that *every* poor Sinner is authorized to say, "GOD gives me his SON, to be my Covenant Surety. I take Him at his Word. The SURETY and all his Merits are mine."—Divinely rich Bounty! O, let Us not refuse what, on this Consideration, the unerring SPIRIT calls *our own Mercy* \*. Let Us adore the Beneficence of our GOD. Let us believe his promising Word. And, in this sweet, this easy Manner, obtain both present and final Salvation.

*Ther.* Let me recollect—*CHRIST* is given for the World, the apostate World, to believe on—*CHRIST* has died, not for the Righteous, but for the Ungodly—*CHRIST* came in the Flesh to save Sinners, even the chief of Sinners.—Well, *Asp.* if these Things are true (and how can they be otherwise? since they are the express Doctrine of Scripture) it is pity, but they were more generally known. For my part, I must confess, they are not only new, but strange to me. Though I have read them in the Bible, yet when I come to consider them, and compare them with what passes in my Breast, I find they are quite contrary to my usual Ways of thinking.

*Asp.* You remind me of a valuable Person, whom I once numbered among my Acquaintance, and

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whose

\* Jonah ii. 8.

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whose Way of thinking was somewhat similar to your own. Will You give me leave to relate his Case?

*Ther.* Most gladly. It will be some Kind of Consolation to hear, that Others have laboured under the same Difficulties with myself, and been subject to the same Distresses. If I am informed of their *Deliverance* from those Distresses, it will be like shewing me an opened Door, for effecting my own Escape. If I am likewise acquainted with the *Manner* of their Deliverance, this will furnish me with a Clue to guide my Steps.

*Asp.* This Person was roused from a Habit of Indolence and Supineness, into a serious Concern for his eternal Welfare. Convinced of his depraved Nature and aggravated Guilt, He had recourse to the Scriptures, and to frequent Prayer. He attended the Ordinances of Christianity, and sought earnestly for an *assured Interest* in *CHRIST*. But found no stedfast Faith, and tasted very little Comfort. At length, He applied to an eminent Divine, and laid open the State of his Heart. Short, but weighty, was the Answer he received. "I perceive, Sir, the Cause of all your Distress. You do not, you will not, come to *CHRIST* as a Sinner. This Mistake stands between your Soul and the Joy of Religion. This detains you in the Gall of Bitterness; and take heed, O! take heed, lest it consign you over to the Bond of Iniquity!" This Admonition never departed from the Gentleman's Mind; and it became a happy Means of removing the Obstructions to his Peace,

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Remember this little History, *Theron*; and may it prove as efficacious for your Good, as it is pertinent to your Circumstances! Remember, that the free Grant of *CHRIST*, made in the Word of Truth, and addressed to Sinners of Mankind, is the only Basis and Ground-work of Faith. An Apostle, after all the Labours of his exemplary Life, can have no better. And a *Magdalene* or a *Manasseh*, as a Motive and Encouragement for their turning to the LORD, have the very same.

But we digress from the principal Subject. Since You disapprove *my* Account of Faith, I must desire You to favour me with a Description, more correct and unexceptionable. For, as You justly observed, this is a *very momentous* Article.—Is not *CHRIST* the Source of all spiritual Good, and Faith the main Channel of Conveyance? Surely then it should be made and kept, as clear as possible. —Is not *CHRIST* the Foundation of all true Godliness, and Faith the Master-arch in this sacred Structure? Surely then it should be raised and turned, with the utmost Care.

*Ther. Palæmon's* Account is this—*Faith*, He says, is a firm Persuasion, that *JESUS CHRIST* has shed his Blood, and fulfilled all Righteousness; has sustained the Punishment due to Sin, and obtained full Reconciliation with GOD. That all this Grace, and each of these Benefits, are free, perfectly free; for You, for me, for others. In consequence of this Persuasion, the Sinner flies to *CHRIST*, comes to *CHRIST*, and trusts in *CHRIST* for his own Salvation.

*Asp.* I have the highest Regard for *Palæmon's* Judgment; and I cannot but think, my Opinion is confirmed even by his, — The Act of *flying* to *CHRIST*, is an appropriating Act. It implies an Intention to get out of Danger; it implies a Discovery of *CHRIST* as the appointed Safety; and consists in making Use of Him as such. How can this be done, but by a Persuasion that He is *mine*? That his Sufferings were in *my* Stead, and that his Death is *my* Safe-guard.—What is meant by *Coming* to *CHRIST*, We may learn from *Jeremiah*. *Behold! We come unto Thee, for Thou art the LORD our GOD\**. Coming, You see, includes a real Persuasion, that the LORD is *our* GOD. While We are wholly destitute of this Persuasion, We stand at a Distance, and our Souls are afar off. We are never brought nigh; We never come in the Prophet's Sense; till We are taught to say, each One for Himself, *Thou art the LORD my GOD*.—The Act of *Trusting* in *CHRIST* is much of the same Nature. It presupposes, that *CHRIST* is the Trustee of the Covenant of Grace; it proceeds upon a Conviction of his Faithfulness in executing the Office; and it is a solemn Surrender or Giving up the whole Affair of our Salvation into his Hand. Giving it up, not in Uncertainty of Success (this would be mistrusting, rather than trusting) but with a Certainty, in some measure suitable to the Fidelity and Ability of HIM, with whom We have to do.

If You still are doubtful, whether any such Persuasion is implied in *Trusting*, let Us choose a Referee. Let Us carry our Controversy to the King of *Israel*.

— \* Jer. iii. 22,



*Israel.* Inquire of *David*, why He trusts in the LORD, and what he means by trusting? To both these Inquiries He answers distinctly and fully.  
 “The LORD is my high Tower, my Shield, and  
 “He in whom I trust \*. He is—He is my Shield—  
 “of this I am persuaded, and therefore I trust in  
 “him: or this I believe, and in so doing, I trust  
 “on Him.”

*Ther.* There is an Air of Assurance in your Representation of Faith; which sounds harsh in my Ear, and appears presumptuous in my Eye. It is as if People pretended to know their Seat in Heaven, before the Judgment Day.

*Asp.* The *Papists*, I own, take great Offence at this Expression, and utterly explode this Doctrine. But they are no infallible Guides, for Us to follow; neither are they very inviting Patterns, for Us to imitate. You and I, *Theron*, cannot be offended at the Expression or the Doctrine, if We recollect what We have been taught in the first Stage of Life, and what is professed in the last Scene of Mortality. We are taught, even from our Infancy, that the Sacrament of the LORD's Supper, is not only a Sign of Spiritual Grace, but a Pledge to assure Us thereof. At the Interment of the Dead, We profess our sure and certain Hope of a Resurrection to eternal Life. That this is always applied, 'with due Propriety, in our Burial-Service, I will not venture to assert; that it sufficiently countenances my Sentiments, None will undertake to deny. And if this countenances, the Apostles authorize them, when He addresses Us with this very remarkable Exhortation; *Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness*

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to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of *JESUS*, let Us draw near with a true Heart in full Assurance of Faith; with a firm Persuasion of Acceptance; with a certain Expectation of Success.

However, if You dislike the Word Assurance, We will change it for the more softened, and more modestly-sounding Term, *Appropriation*.

*Ther.* You change it for a more softened, not for a more intelligible Term. I must desire to know, what You mean by the Word *Appropriation*.

*Asp.* To appropriate, in the theological Sense, is to take home the Grace of *GOD*, which lies in the common indefinite Grant of the Gospel. Is *CHRIST* the Treasure hid in the Field? To appropriate this Treasure, is to receive and use it as our own Portion. Is *CHRIST* the Balm of *Gilead*, full of saving Health? To appropriate this Balm, is to take and apply it for the Recovery of our own Souls. And without such an Appropriation, how can We either be enriched by the former, or healed by the latter?

Let me farther explain my Meaning, and exemplify the Position, by considering *CHRIST* in his several Offices.—*CHRIST*, as a Priest, is made to guilty Creatures Righteousness. When we appropriate the Grace of our great *HIGH-PRIEST*, this is the Language of our Hearts, *In the LORD have I Righteousness* \*.—*CHRIST*, as a Prophet, is made to ignorant Creatures Wisdom. When we appropriate the Benefits of our unerring *PROPHET*, this is the Persuasion of our Souls, *Though I sit in Darkness, the LORD will be a Light unto me* †.—*CHRIST*,

\* Isa. xlv. 24.

† Mic. vii. 8.

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*CHRIST*, as a King, is made unto depraved Creatures Sanctification. When We appropriate the Munificence of our Almighty KING, this is our comfortable Trust, *The LORD will deliver me from every evil Work* \*.

This is what I mean by Appropriation.—That something of this Kind is included in the Essence of Faith, is the Sentiment I would maintain,—Which Sentiment might be confirmed, if such Confirmation were demanded, by a Multitude of the most illustrious Witnesses. Witnesses so illustrious, that they were a Blessing to the World, and an Honour to human Nature. So numerous, that, without giving an Abstract of their Testimonies, it might seem tedious only to recite their Names †.

*Ther.*

\* 2 Tim. iv. 18.

† If the Reader should inquire after their Names, He will find *some* of them enumerated in the following Catalogue. *Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, Bullinger, Bucer, Knox, Craig, Melvil, Bruce, Davidson, Forbes, &c.—Ursinus, Zanchius, Junius, Piscator, Rollock, Danaeus, Wendelinus, Chamierus, Sharpus, Bodius, Pareus, Altingius, Triglandii (Gisbertus & Jacobus), Arnoldus, Maresius*; the four Professors at *Leyden, Wallaus, Rivetus, Polyander, Thyssus; Wollebius, Heideggerus, Essenius, Turretinus, &c.*—Many eminent *British* Divines, *Bishop Babington, Davenant, Hall; Mr. Perkins, Pemble, Willet, Gauge, Rogers, Burgefs, Owen, Marshal, &c.*

If we were apparently and demonstrably in an Error, yet, to err with such Company, and in the Footsteps of such Guides, must very much tend to mitigate the Severity of Censure. But, I believe, few serious Persons will venture to charge Error and Delusion upon such a venerable Body of Protestant Divines; so eminent

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*Iber.* I will dispense with your Recital of their Names, only let me have a Specimen of their Testimonies.

*Asp.* First, then, let me present You with Dr. Owen; than whom *England* has produced few Writers, either more judicious or more devout. "Faith  
" He tells Us in his *Catechism*, is a gracious Resting  
" upon the free Promises of GOD in *JESUS*  
" *CHRIST* for Mercy, with a *firm Persuasion* of  
" Heart, that GOD is a reconciled Father to Us  
" in the SON of his Love."—Next let me introduce the learned and justly celebrated *Altingius*, Professor of Divinity at *Heidelberg*. "Faith, He  
" says, is a Knowledge of the Grace of GOD  
" in *CHRIST*, together with a fiduciary Reli-  
" ance on it, or an *Application* of it to a Man's own  
" Self."—To these let me add the unanimous Suffrage of the Churches of the *Palatinate*. It is asked, in the twenty first Question of their public Catechism, "What is true Faith?" To which this  
Answer

ment for their Learning, and so exemplary for their Holiness; whose Labours were so remarkably owned by GOD, and whose Sentiments, on this particular Subject, have been adopted by so many reformed Churches.—The Declarations of the *English* and *Palatine* Churches are produced in the Dialogue. I have in my Hand an Extract from the Confessions and Standard Doctrines of the Church—of *Scotland*—of *Ireland*—of *France*—of *Helvetia*. With all which *Aspasio* has the Happiness to agree. Only some of them are much stronger in displaying and maintaining the special *Fiducia*, or the appropriating Persuasion of Faith. To quote them, would dignify and strengthen the Cause. But, to avoid Prolixity, I forego this Advantage.



Answer is returned. "It is not only an Assent  
" to all the Truths which GOD has revealed in  
" his Word; but it is an *assured* Trust, wrought by  
" the HOLY SPIRIT in my Heart, that Remif-  
" sion of Sins, complete Righteousness, and eternal  
" Life are given; freely given, not to Others only,  
" but to *myself*; and all this, from the mere  
" Mercy of GOD, through the alone Merits of  
" *CHRIST*."

These Testimonies are but as the Tythe to the whole Crop. Yet these are more than enough to exempt me from the Charge of Singularity. You will not wonder therefore, if I still abide by the good old *Protestant* Doctrine, which is espoused by so many of the ablest Judges; which was the darling Tenet of almost all our Reformers; which has been so signally instrumental in demolishing the Superstitions of Popery; and is so evidently conducive to the Holiness and the Happiness of Christians.—Especially, as I apprehend, the Determinations of Scripture, and the Experience of scriptural Saints, are all on my Side.

*Ther.* You have now brought the Cause to the proper Bar. When a Question so important is debated, and an Interest so momentous is concerned, I cannot acquiesce in any Authority less than divine. I cannot, and indeed I think, We ought not. Nothing should satisfy Us on such an Occasion, but the Word, which is unerring and decisive; the Word, by which We are to stand or fall eternally. Whence does it appear, that the Determinations of this divine Word, are on your Side?

*Asp.*

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*Asp.* From the noblest Description of Faith, which Language itself can form. The Writer to the *Hebrews*, having mentioned the Life of Faith, the Perseverance of Faith, and the End or Reward of Faith, proceeds to a Definition of this leading Grace. *Now Faith is the Substance of Things hoped for, the Evidence of Things not seen* \*.—*The Evidence*, exhibiting not a faint Surmise, but a clear Demonstration, both of invisible Blessings, and of our Right to enjoy them.—*The Substance*, realizing what is promised; and giving Us, as it were, a Possession of good Things that are remote, a present Possession of good Things that are future.

*Ther.* What are those Blessings, and these good Things?

*Asp.* I will inform my *Theron*; and in such a Manner, from such Passages, as shall farther ascertain my Representation of Faith.—What says the Apostle of the Gentiles? *I preached unto You the Gospel* †.—And what is the Substance of this evangelical Dispensation? *CHRIST died for our Sins* ‡.—That so exalted a Person as the SON of GOD, and LORD of Glory, should die, is wonderful—That He should die for *Sins*, the most abominable Objects, and for Sinners, the most detestable Creatures, is abundantly more wonderful—That He should die, not for Sins in general, but for *our Sins* in particular, this is inexpressibly wonderful, and at the same Time inexpressibly comfortable—Here we have the Gospel and its capital Blessing, expressed in this Proposition, *CHRIST died for Sins*.

\* Heb. xi. 1.

† 1 Cor. xv. 1.

‡ 1 Cor. xv. 3.

*Sins.* Here We have Faith and its principal Acting, expressed in this Proposition, *CHRIST died for our Sins.* Till the former is preached, the Doctrine is not Gospel; till the latter is believed, it should seem from *St. Paul's* Account, the Conviction is not Faith.

Let me produce another Instance, extracted, like the preceding, from the Rolls of Heaven. *This is the Record, that GOD hath given to Us eternal Life\**; not proposed it, on I know not what Conditions, but *hath given.* Freely and fully, without any Reserve, and with a Liberality suited to his inconceivable Goodness, hath given the richest of all Prizes: and not to some only, or to Others, but to *Us, even to Us.*

*Ther.* Us, that is, the Apostles and exalted Saints.

*Assp.* Was eternal Life given them because they were Apostles? No, verily; but because *CHRIST* died for them.—Did *CHRIST* die for them, because they were exalted Saints? In no wise; but because they were miserable Sinners.—Eternal Life was purchased for them, when they were Sinners. It was consigned over to them, when they were Sinners. And neither the Purchase, nor the Gift, were founded on their *being* Saints, but aimed at *making* them so.

That *CHRIST died for our Sins*—That *GOD hath given to Us eternal Life.* These are the Blessings, of which Faith is the Evidence; these the good Things, of which Faith is the Substance. This is the Honey in the evangelical Hive: and I am at a loss to conceive, how We can taste the Honey, without

\* 1 John v. 9.

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some Appropriation of the good Things to Ourselves. — This, if I mistake not, is comprehended in all those figurative Descriptions of Faith, which occur in holy Writ.

*Ther.* Favour me with some of those Descriptions. I begin to see a peculiar Beauty, and an unequaled Richness, in the Figures of Scripture. Nothing yields me a more refined Pleasure, than to investigate and discover the exact Sense of those instructive Images. It is somewhat like kindling the consecrated Incense: which, when rising in a Flame, diffused Light; when spreading in Clouds of Fragrance, distributed Refreshment.

*Assp.* Faith is styled, *A Looking unto JESUS*. But if We do not look unto *JESUS*, as the Propitiation for our Sins, what Comfort or what Benefit can We derive from the Sight? — *A Receiving of CHRIST*. But can I have any Pretence to receive Him, or take Possession of his Merits, unless I am convinced, that they are intended for me? This is what neither the Dictates of Conscience will allow, nor the Laws of Reason authorize. — *A Resting upon CHRIST\**. But how can We rest on a Surety, if He has not interposed on our Behalf? Or how confide in a Payment, which We believe to be made for others, not for ourselves? — Surely, *Theron*, when

\* I find two Words in the Original, which express the Privilege and the Duty of *resting on CHRIST*.  which implies such a State of Acquiescence, as silences the Clamours of Conscience, and composes the Perturbation of the Spirit. מנוחה which signifies the Refreshment and *Repose* of a weary Pilgrim; when He arrives at the End of his Journey, and is settled for Life in a secure, commodious, plentiful Habitation. *Psal.* xxxvii. 7. *Isa.* xxviii. 12.



when I rest upon an Object, I use it as *my* Support. When I receive a Gift, I take it as *my own* Property. And when the *Israelites* looked unto the brazen Serpent, they certainly regarded it as a Remedy, each particular Person for *Himself*.

*Ther.* To cast Ourselves upon *CHRIST*, as an all-sufficient SAVIOUR; and rely on Him, for our whole Salvation; is not this real Faith? This is what I heard, some time ago, from a celebrated Pulpit.

*Asp.* If You rely on the All-sufficiency of his *Will*, as well as of his Power; if You take the Comfort and appropriate the Benefit, resulting from both; You practise the very Thing I recommend. This is what was taught, from the Pulpit of Infallibility; and by those first of Preachers, who spake as the HOLY GHOST gave them Utterance. Let the convinced Sinner, and the afflicted Soul, *trust in the Name of the LORD, and stay upon his GOD*. Let Him not only reverence *CHRIST*, as the incarnate GOD, and therefore mighty to save; but look upon *CHRIST* as *his* GOD, and therefore willing to save. Thus let Him *lean upon the ROCK* \* of Ages, without indulging a Doubt, concerning his Right to make use of it, or the Possibility of its failing him.

To cast Ourselves upon *CHRIST*; to cast our Burden, or to cast all our Care † upon the LORD; are Metaphors, which may receive some Elucidation, from an Incident recorded in the *Acts*. When the Mariners and Passengers, which sailed with St. Paul, saw their Vessel shattered; saw the Waves prevailing;

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vailing;

\* *Isa. l. 10.*

† *Επιφορέατες, 1 Pet. v. 7.*

vailing; saw no Hope of Safety from continuing in the Ship; they cast themselves \* upon the floating Planks. They cast themselves upon the Planks without any Scruple, not questioning their Right to make use of them; and they clave to those Supporters with a chearful Confidence, not doubting but, according to the Apostle's Promise, they should escape safe to Land.—Be this what People mean, when they speak of *venturing* or *casting* themselves upon *CHRIST*, and I approve the Expression, I subscribe the Doctrine. It speaks what I wish for my Friend, for myself, and for my Fellow-sinners.

Let Us shift our Situation, and view the Point in another Light. Consider the blessed and glorious Object of our Faith.—*CHRIST* is represented by the Similitude of Bread, heavenly Bread, for the hungry Soul. Faith is characterized by *eating* the Food. And can this be done without a personal Application?—*CHRIST* is held forth under the Image of living Waters, ever running, and always free for the thirsty Appetite. But let them run ever so copiously, let them be presented ever so freely, all this will neither quench the Thirst, nor refresh the Spirits, unless they are *drunk*. To do this is the Business of Faith.—*CHRIST* is described as a Garment, to accommodate destitute, and beautify deformed Creatures. Faith is expressed by *putting on* this commodious Garment, and wearing this beautiful Robe. And can any Idea, or any Expression, more strongly denote an actual Appropriation?

*Ther.* It is evident, that many holy People in former Ages, were not possessed of Assurance.—What is the Language of *David* †? It is all Despondency.

\* *Atropurphalos*, Acts xxvii. 43.

decency. *I am cast out of the Sight of thine Eyes.*—To the same melancholy Tune is the Harp of *Asaph* strung. *Is his Mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his Promise fail for evermore?*—The same jealous and distrustful Air breathes in the Complaint of the Church. *The LORD hath forsaken me, and my LORD hath forgotten me.*—Why then should my *Asaph* set up a Rule, stricter and higher, than those eminent Saints attained?

*Asp.* You should rather ask; Why have the best Judges, and the most exemplary Christians, in their several Writings, set up this Rule? Why have the Apostles of our LORD, and the SPIRIT of our GOD, speaking in the Bible, set up this Rule?—To which I might reply; Because it is, of all Precepts, the most beneficial. Therefore, they have not so much set it up, under the Notion of a strict Rule; as they have set it forth, under the Character of a choice Blessing.

Your Complaint, when put into its proper Language, seems to run thus; “Why must We be obliged to trust in *CHRIST* alone? Why must We be obliged to assure Ourselves of Salvation by *HIM*?”—Whereas, instead of a Complaint, it should be Matter of Exultation, and We should rather express Ourselves in this Manner; “Bless the LORD, O my Soul; that a Sinner, such a vile Sinner, should be allowed to take *CHRIST* and all his Salvation as my own; and thus to assure myself of Pardon, Holiness, and Glory.”

This Blessing was certainly enjoyed by the holy Men of old; but, like every other Species of Felicity in this World, it was enjoyed after an imperfect



Manner.—They had an assured Persuasion of GOD's present Favour, and of their own final Happiness. Nevertheless, this assured Persuasion was liable to the Assaults, both of outward Temptations, and of inward Corruptions. Which might, for a While, impair its Vigour, though not destroy its Being. As under a transient Swoon, the Spirits fail, the Colour departs, but the vital Principle subsists.

You may farther observe, concerning those pious Persons, that, when they cease to exercise this Confidence of Faith, they lament the Failure; *I said, this is my Infirmary* \*.—They chide themselves for it; *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul?*—They encourage themselves against it; *Hope in GOD* †, it is thy unquestionable Privilege.—How could they do this? On what Grounds, or from what Motive? If they had not a *secret* Persuasion, that their Ransom was paid, and their GOD reconciled. Consequently, that all their Doubts were an Injury to his Fidelity and to his Goodness.

Nay, the Church, even under her darkeſt Apprehensions, ſtill ſpeaks the Sentiment, ſtill retains the Grace, for which I am pleading. *My LORD*, uttered with her Lips, argues an *applicatory* Faith in her Heart.—So copious and pregnant are the Evidences of this precious Doctrine! It is confirmed by that very Paſſage, which was produced for its Confutation.

*Ther.* If this be the Sentiment of the Church in general, is it alſo the Temper of her particular Members? Was each of them animated by this firm and lively Faith?

*Aſ.*

\* Pſal. lxxvii. 10.

† Pſal. xlii. 5.



*Asp.* Let these particular Persons appear, and answer for themselves.—Hear the Declaration of the Psalmist; *Bless the LORD, O my Soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name* \*. What is the Cause of this holy Transport, and devout Praise? Is it, because GOD possibly may, because HE probably will? No; but because HE actually does forgive: *Who forgiveth all thine Iniquities*.—Take notice of Job's Belief, and Job's Support, amidst his unexampled Sufferings. *I know that my REDEEMER liveth*; not only that there is a Redeemer, but that He is, together with all his saving Benefits, mine. Which, being a Truth so sweet and delightful, is expressed a second Time; *whom I shall see for myself* †, to my own Advantage, and for my own Comfort: see Him exerting his almighty Power and infinite Mercy, to rescue my Body from the Grave, and to deliver my Soul from Hell.—What was Habakkuk's Security, amidst the threatening, the tremendous, the triumphant Malice of his own, and his Country's Enemies? *The LORD GOD is my Strength*. He says not, *I wish, I pray*, for the divine Favour, and the divine Succour; but I am persuaded, they both are mine; my inestimable Portion, and my inviolable Safeguard. *He will make my Feet like Hind's Feet* that I shall perfectly escape from all Danger; and *He will make me walk upon mine high Places*, beyond the Reach of every Evil ‡.

*Ther.* Is this the Language of Believers under the New Testament Dispensation?

X 3

*Asp.*

\* Psal. ciii. 1, 3. † Job xix. 25, 27. ‡ Hab.  
iii. 19.

*Asp.* Under every Dispensation, *Theron*.—They who lived before the Law, were persuaded \* of the Promises; had not the least Distrust, with regard to the Certainty of their Performance; nay, they embraced them † as their own, they hugged them, as it were, to their very Souls.—They who lived under the Law could say; *As far as the East is from the West, so far hath He removed our Transgressions from Us ‡*.—And can You imagine, in the Days of the Gospel, when our Advantages are greater and our Light is clearer, that our Faith should be weaker, or our Hope fainter? St. Peter makes a Profession, which excludes all Doubting; *I am a Witness of the Sufferings of CHRIST, and also a Partaker of the Glory that shall be revealed ¶*. St. Paul answers in the same heroic Strain; *I know whom I have believed; and I am persuaded that neither Life, nor Death, nor any Creature, shall be able to separate me from the Love of GOD, which is in CHRIST JESUS my LORD §*. With both which, the Confession of Faith recorded by St. Luke, is exactly correspondent; *We believe that, through the Grace of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, We shall be saved even as They ¶*.

*Ther.* Was not this a Privilege peculiar to the Apostles?

*Asp.* By no means. All Believers are Brethren, and have like precious Faith.—Hear how St. Peter exhorts all his People; *Gird up the Loins of your Mind, and hope to the End; or, as the Word should rather be translated, hope perfectly, hope assuredly,*  
for

\* *Πιστεύετε*, Heb. xi. 13. † *Αγκαλιζόμενοι*. ‡ Psal. ciii. 12.  
§ 1 Pet. v. 1. § Rom. viii. 29. ¶ Acts xv. 11.

for the Grace that is to be brought unto You at the Revelation of JESUS CHRIST\*. Maintain, not a dim, but a bright Hope; not a wavering, but a steady Expectation, of eternal Life. That free, but grand Gift, of which the LORD JESUS, at his second Coming, shall put You in full Possession.

—The Apostle, writing to his Hebrew Converts, encourages them all to hold fast the Confidence, and the Rejoicing of Hope, firm unto the End†. From whence it is deducible, that a Trust amounting to Confidence, and the Joy which naturally results from such a Trust, were the common Portion of Christians; possessed, not barely by some few exalted Saints, but by the Followers of JESUS in general.

—I might bring many more Instances. But why should I multiply Proofs? Since the beloved Disciple declares; *These Things have I written unto You, that believe on the Name of the SON of GOD, that Ye may know that Ye have eternal Life.*

*Ther.* True, *Aspasio*. This coincides with my Apprehensions. The Scriptures are written—first, that We may believe, and be intitled to eternal Life—next, that We may have the Knowledge of our Belief, and a Consciousness of our Title. The Apostle supposes his Correspondents to possess the former, yet not to have attained the latter.

*Asp.* Is it certain, that He makes such a Supposition? He writes, I imagine, not with a View of

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leading

\* 1 Pet. i. 13. Εἰς τέλος or μέχρι τέλους, signify To the End. But τελως, as far as I can recollect, is never used in this Sense, either by sacred or profane Writers. It may be rendered *perfectè, integrè*, in this Connection, *cum firmâ Fiduciâ*, with a firm Affiance.

† Heb. iii. 6.



leading them to either, but of *confirming* them in both.—He intimates, that the Privilege and the Comfort should go together. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Surety; We should be persuaded, that He has paid our Debt, and satisfied Justice to the very uttermost Farthing. If We believe, that *CHRIST* is our Bridegroom; We should rest assured, that his Righteousness, his Inheritance, and his Kingdom are ours. And why should We take Pains to separate, what GOD's Word and the very Nature of Things have united? Will this turn to our Advantage? Must it not issue in our Loss?—Besides, according to your own Interpretation, whoever falls short of this cheering Knowledge, falls short of *one* great End for which the Scriptures were written. He receives not his full Reward. He only *gleans*, where He might *reap*. Is tossed on the Ocean of Uncertainty: whereas *they that have believed*, have gained the Port, have dropped their Anchor, and *enter into Rest*\*.

*Ther.* Believed! What? That our Sins are laid upon *CHRIST*; that He was obedient in our Stead; that all spiritual Blessings are thereby procured for *our*—even for *our* Enjoyment?

*Assp.* The Blessings You mention, are evidently the Purport of the Gospel. And I know of no other justifying Faith, but that which relates to the Gospel, and believes its Report†. Nor can I think, that any other Belief will administer the Tranquility, or produce the Rest, specified by the Apostle.—But here, I find, lies the Core and Root of our Controversy. This is the precise Point to be settled; What

\* Heb. iv. 3.

† Isa. liii. 4.



it is to *believe*? What is included in this very important Word?—This Question might renew our Dispute, and cause the past Arguments to recur. Whereas, I would gladly get rid of Disputation. We have already been too long detained in these disagreeable Paths. However, since You have given the Occasion, I may just touch upon another Text or two. For I would willingly drive this Nail to the Head; and not leave my Friend unconvinced, on a Subject of the utmost Consequence.

The LORD declares by his Prophet, *I even I am He, that blotteth out thy Transgressions*. To believe, is to subscribe this Declaration; to subscribe with our Hand, and profess from our Heart, “LORD it is done, as Thou hast said.”—Faith is, if I may so speak, the Echo of the divine Voice. It eagerly catches, and punctually reverberates the joyful Sound. Does GOD say, *Thou art my People*? Faith replies, *Thou art my GOD*\*: not barely desiring, but confidently averring, an Interest in his Favour. This Explanation of Faith, is given Us by a Wisdom, which cannot be deceived; by a Fidelity, which cannot deceive.—Once more. Our LORD bears this Testimony concerning *Thomas*; *Thomas, thou hast believed*. Now then, I think, We have got an infallible Touchstone. Let Us examine, what that is, which *JESUS CHRIST* calls *Believing*. Whatever it be, it is the Determination of Truth itself; and should pass for a Verdict, from which there lies no Appeal. And this, this is the Confession of *Thomas*, *My LORD, and my GOD*†. This, this expresses what our Divine MASTER calls *Believing*.

\* Hof. ii. 13.

† John xx. 28, 29.

*Believing.* When, therefore, We confess with our Lips, and are persuaded in our Hearts, that *JESUS* is our *LORD*, who bought Us with his Blood; that *JESUS* is our *GOD*, who will exert all his adorable Perfections for our Good; then We truly believe. We believe, in our SAVIOUR's Sense of the Word; We have that Faith, which *He* allows to be genuine.

*Ther.* Is this the *constant* Language of Faith? According to this Account, there is no Difference between the Infant and the Adult: between the newborn Babe, and the full-grown Man in *CHRIST*. Your spiritual Children, *Aspasio*, must be Men from their Birth; nay, born in all the Vigour of Manhood. Whereas, the Apostle makes an evident Difference between the *Babes*, the *young Men*, and the *Fathers*; between Faith, the Assurance of Faith, and the full Assurance of Faith. If We are told of a Patriarch, who was *strong in Faith*; We read of some *Roman* Converts, who were *weak in the Faith*; and We hear our *LORD* speaking to Disciples, who were *fearful and of little Faith*.

*Asp.* Between Faith, and the full Assurance of Faith, the Apostle makes a Difference. The one is the most exalted Pitch, where the other is but an inferior Elevation. Yet both are Rounds of the same Ladder.—I don't remember, that the sacred Writer any where distinguishes between Faith and Assurance, *ἰσχυς* and *ἡμεροῖσθις*, *Faith* and *Confidence*, are joined in the Epistle to the *Ephesians*. It is the Opinion of the best Critics, that the Sense of the latter is included in the former. The Critic's Opinion is confirmed by the Apostle's Declaration, *We have Access*  
with

*with Confidence through Faith* \*. Could yonder Sun diffuse Warmth through the Air, if it had no Warmth in itself? No more could Faith produce Confidence in the Believer, if, in its own Nature, it did not contain the same.

The Case of *little Faith*, I think, may be explained from our LORD's own Expostulation; *O Thou of little Faith, wherefore didst Thou doubt?* Here was a Faith, not only in CHRIST's Power, but also in his Will. Nay; here was an appropriating Faith, by which the Apostle applied both to himself,—“ I verily believe, that my Divine MASTER is able to preserve me, even though I venture to tread upon this tempestuous Sea. I am persuaded likewise, that He will uphold me, and not suffer his Servant to perish in the hazardous Enterprize.” Nothing less than this could have produced that hazardous Enterprize, or have emboldened Him to walk upon the rolling Billows.

Do You not discern, in this Instance, some Degree of personal Application, some real Assurance of Faith? 'Tis true, this Faith was violently assaulted by Doubts, and greatly infeeble by Fears †. Yet still

\* Eph. iii. 12.

† I must beg of the candid Reader, to take particular Notice of this Limitation; and must intreat the impartial Examiner, not to forget this Concession. We nowhere suppose, that a Freedom from all Fears, or a Superiority to all Doubts, are included in the Nature of Faith. We only affirm, that an appropriating Persuasion or Assurance, are necessary to the Being of Faith. This Assurance may be encumbered with Doubts, and may conflict with Fears. But still it is Assurance—real Assurance—and *proves* itself to be such, by opposing and struggling with the contrary Principle.



still it was of the applicatory Kind. *He can, He will*, were expressive of its Nature; though the boisterous Winds, and the terrifying Appearance of Things, almost drowned its Voice, or stifled the Words in their Utterance.

*Ther.* If You allow no Difference between Faith and Confidence, I am very sure, St. John puts a Difference between *Babes, young Men, and Fathers.*

*Asp.* He does, *Theron.* And so would I. Neither can I think of any Thing more proper to explain my Meaning, or establish my Tenet, than your own Comparison.—In some fruitful Family, You may see one Child in Leading-Strings; another able to walk by itself; a third come home, improved and cultivated, from the School of Literature. Observe their Speech. One lisps out a few broken Sentences; another talks intelligibly, but very incorrectly; the last has learned to express Himself with tolerable Propriety. Yet each speaks the *same* Language, notwithstanding the various Degrees of Fluency in their Utterance, or Purity in their Diction.—So Faith always speaks one and the same uniform Language. Whether she lisps or stammers; whether She whispers in faint Accents, or raises her Voice in a more manly Tone; this is still the unvaried Import of her Speech; *GOD, even our own GOD, will give Us his Blessing.*—Can You forget, how St. John addresses even his little Children? *I write unto You, little Children, because your Sins ARE FORGIVEN.\**

*Ther.*

\* 1 John ii. 12.



*Ther.* Will not this Account discourage some, and offend others, who are not arrived at such an exalted Pitch?

*Asp.* I would not offend the meanest, nor discourage the weakest of my REDEEMER's Servants.—As for *Offence*; that cannot be given, and ought not to be taken, when all We advance is strictly conformable to the unerring Oracles. Whereas, to qualify and attenuate the scriptural Descriptions of Faith, in Complaisance to our own Experience—to make the unhappy Fluctuations and unworthy Suspicions, which possess the Breasts of some particular Christians—to make them the Rule of explaining, or the Measure of enforcing so capital a Duty; this, sure, would be an Offence to GOD, an Injury to his Word, and detrimental to the Welfare of Souls.

With regard to *Discouragement*; I cannot conceive, how this should ensue, from informing the poor Sinner, that He has a Right to apply *CHRIST*, and all *CHRIST*'s Merits to himself: or from exhorting the poor Sinner to do this, without any Hesitation, and with a resolute Dependence. In this Case, to *doubt* is to be discouraged; as much as You want Certainty, so much You want Consolation. The proper Way to comfort these distressed People, is, not to allow but to dissipate their Doubts; to blow away those dead Ashes, that the smothered Embers may shine and glow.

Were we to inquire after the Cause of that Disquietude and Despondency, which are so common among *modern* Professors, I am inclined to suspect, We should find it lying hid in their wrong Apprehensions

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hensions both of *CHRIST*, and of Faith.—They look upon *CHRIST*, as a rigorous and forbidding Monarch, who insists upon some hard Terms and high Qualifications. Whereas, his Heart and his Arms are ever open. His Heart as open, as infinite Love can set it: his Arms as open, as infinite Merit can make them.—They look upon Faith, as containing a Possibility only, or at most a Probability of Salvation through his Name. It is with them a Kind of *Peradventure*. A Situation of Mind, fluctuating and pendulous. “Perhaps, I may succeed, and be eternally blessed. Perhaps, I may be rejected, and eternally ruined.” Such a State of Suspence, in an Affair of everlasting Consequence, cannot but create Uneasiness and Anxiety.

This Uneasiness and Anxiety seem to have been little known in the earlier and better Days of the Church. And why? Because Christians were then exposed to the Rage of Persecution? Because they were placed nearer the Time of *CHRIST*’s sojourning on Earth? I rather think, because they were taught this particular and comfortable Application of *CHRIST* and his Righteousness. They exercised a confident Affiance on *JESUS*, as *their own REDEEMER*; and were shewn a more direct Way to obtain this Assurance, than merely to search after their own renewed Qualities.

*Ther.* Surely, *Aspasio*, in this Particular You differ, not from me only, but from the Generality of the *Orthodox*.

*Assp.* I am sorry to find myself under a Necessity of differing from any worthy Persons, much more of disagreeing with the Generality. This I can safely  
aver,

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aver, that it is not from an Affectation of Novelty, or any Fondness for Disputing, but from a disinterested Regard to the Truth of the Gospel. I should be glad to have the Concurrence of all the Serious, and all the Pious. But I dare not purchase their Approbation, I dare not attempt a Coalition of Sentiments, by diminishing the boundless Riches of Grace, or restricting the absolute Freeness of Salvation by *CHRIST*.

You are pleased to remind me of the *Orthodox*. Pray, my dear Friend, what is the Standard of Orthodoxy?—Is it the Word of Revelation? This speaks once, yea twice, nay some Hundreds of Times in our Favour.—Is it the Doctrine of our Reformers from Popery? With these We jar not, but exactly harmonize.—Is it to be taken from the old Confessions of Faith, and the Catechisms of Protestant Churches? To these We appeal, and have the Sanction of their Authority.—Has the *modern* Way of treating and stating this momentous Subject so much to alledge for its Support?

Let me farther ask—Are We better than our Fathers? Is Christianity in a thriving Condition, or practical Religion on the advancing Hand? The Reverse, the melancholy Reverse is undeniably true.—When our Writers enforced, and our Preachers urged, what I am defending, Professors were alive, and animated with the Power of Godliness. Whereas, now We seem to be degenerated into the mere Form; We have a Name to live, but are languid, listless, and if not dead\*, yet ready to die.—It behoves Us therefore to consider,

\* Rev. iii. 1.



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sider, whether the Declension, the Decays, the Unfruitfulness, so justly lamented in the present Age, be not owing to the Absence of this appropriating Belief, or this assured Persuasion.

A sweet Assurance of Pardon, a comfortable Persuasion of our Reconciliation with GOD, an established Hope of eternal Glory through *JESUS CHRIST*; these will be operative in the Soul, as “a Torch in the Sheaf.” These will inkindle Love, and increase Watchfulness; these will beget the true Humility of Mind, and work an unfeigned Abhorrence of Sin; these will enlarge the Heart with Charity, and exalt the Affections above the World. These are the proper, and the only effectual Means of *making the Man of GOD perfect*, that is, *thoroughly furnished to every good Work* \*.

But the doubting Frame is not fited to yield any of these Fruits. Nay, I am apprehensive, there are several Graces, which can hardly be exercised, several Duties,

\* For the Display and Confirmation of these Points, I do, with great Pleasure, and without any Diffidence, refer to Mr. MARSHAL'S *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*. Which I shall not recommend in the Style of a Critic, or like a Reader of Taste, but with all the Simplicity of the weakest Christian; I mean, from my own Experience. It has been made one of the most useful Books to my own Soul. I scarce ever fail to receive spiritual Consolation and Strength from the Perusal of it. And was I to be banished into some desolate Island, possessed only of two Books besides my BIBLE, this should be one of the two, and perhaps the first that I would choose.

Should any Person, hitherto a Stranger to the Work, purchase it on this Recommendation, I must desire to suggest one Caution—That He be not surpris'd, if, in the Beginning, He meets with something new, and quite out  
of



Duties, which can scarcely be performed, so long as this Spirit of Diffidence prevails.

*Ther.* Name them, *Aspasio*.

*Asp.* I am afraid, lest I should seem to arrogate the Office of a Teacher; which neither becomes my Condition, nor is agreeable to my Temper.

*Ther.* I beseech You, my dear Friend, let Us wave Ceremony, and have nothing to do with Compliments. My Soul is in jeopardy. My present Comfort, and my everlasting Happiness, are at stake. And shall we suffer any little Punctilios to overbear such weighty Considerations?

Suppose, You are a Teacher; I have great Need, and am very desirous, to become your Scholar. For I freely confess, that, knowing as I may seem in other Instances, I am very ignorant in the great Peculiarities of the Gospel. Nay, though I have read the Scriptures in a *critical* View, I have been an utter Stranger to their spiritual Meaning. Here, I am uninstructed as a Babe; here, therefore, I ought to be teachable as a Babe. Yes; in this respect I would become as a *little Child*, that I may enter into the Knowledge, and possess the Privileges of the Kingdom of Heaven.

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Y

*Asp.*

of the common Road. Or, if surprised, that He would not be offended, but calmly and attentively proceed. He will find the Author's Design opening itself by degrees. He will discern more and more the Propriety of his Method. And what might, at the first View, appear like a Stumbling-block; will prove to be a fair, compendious, and ample Avenue—to the Palace of *Truth*—to the Temple of *Holiness*—and to the Bowers of *Happiness*.

As the Book itself is scarce, a very good Abridgment of it may be had at Mr. *Keith's* in *Gracechurch-street*.

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*Ass.* Your Answer, *Theron*, shall be a Law.—  
*Love to GOD*, is the first Commandment; and  
 without all Peradventure, is the principal Grace.  
 But is it easy, is it possible to love *GOD*, before  
 We have any Persuasion of his Love to Us? This  
 is what the Apostles did not, could not do. And,  
 if it exceeded their Ability, it will doubtless be above  
 the Reach of our Capacity. The Thing may be  
 attempted; the Practice may be urged. We may  
 see the Necessity of it, and desire to perform it.  
 But we shall never, never be able to exercise it, till  
 We have some comfortable Apprehension of *GOD*'s  
 Reconciliation and good Will to Us. *We love*  
*HIM*—Wherefore? From what Inducement?  
*Because HE first loved Us* \*; and because this  
 Love hath been made evident to our Consciences, by  
 the Light of Faith.

What think You of *Delight in GOD*? This also  
 is a christian Grace. But *how can Two walk toge-*  
*ther, except they be agreed?* We never covet an In-  
 timacy with the Person, who declares Himself our  
 Enemy. Nay, if there be only a Suspicion, that  
 He bears Us a secret ill Will, We shall be jealous  
 of trusting Him, and averse to approach Him. This  
 was the Case of our first Parents, immediately after  
 the Fall. Instead of drawing near to their CRE-  
 ATOR, with Pleasure and Gratitude; they fled  
 from Him, with Anxiety and Terror. And why?  
 Because they were under the alarming Apprehensions  
 of his Displeasure.—Whereas, let us once believe,  
 what the Apostle affirms; *When we were Enemies,*  
*We were reconciled to GOD by the Death of his SON* †.

Let

\* 1 John iv. 10.

† Rom. v. 10.

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Let Us cordially credit, what the Prophet repeatedly declares ; *Therefore will the LORD wait that He may be gracious unto You ; and therefore will He be exalted, that He may have Mercy upon You \**. Then we shall seek his Face with Alacrity. Our Affections will be on the Wing to salute their Almighty BENEFACTOR. We shall joy in GOD, through our LORD JESUS CHRIST.

*Ther.* To the Enjoyment of many spiritual Consolations, and the Exercise of several delightful Graces, I acknowledge, an assured Faith is necessary ; but—

*Asp.* Ay, *Theron*, You may well hesitate. It will be difficult to fill up the Chasm in your Discourse. For my part, I know not any Duty of Holiness, which can be performed aright, without some Degree of this confiding Faith.—We are to walk worthy of HIM, who hath called Us to his Kingdom and  
Y 2 Glory:

\* *Isa.* xxx. 18. That admirable Commentator V I -  
T R I N G A, who generally draws his Bow with a steady Hand, and shoots his Arrow with the exactest Aim, Here seems to miss the Mark. He appears to have thought, that *waiting to be gracious*, implies a Delay in the Exercise of the Attribute, and is the same as to abstain from being gracious. Had this been the Meaning, the Language would probably have been, not לְחַנּוּן but מְחַנּוּן — *To wait to be gracious* signifies, to stand over a People with the continued Tenders of Grace and Mercy, even while they refuse to accept them. This was the Case with GOD and *Israel*. GOD promised to defend the *Israelites* ; they obstinately refused to confide in his Protection. GOD dissuaded them from trusting in the Succour of *Egypt* ; they presumptuously resolved to rely on that broken Reed. *Therefore, says GOD, I will*  
—withdraw

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*Glory* \* : but if we doubt, whether We in particular are called, how can this influence our Conversation?

—We are to be *Followers of GOD*, as his dear *Children* †. But if We do not, cannot, will not believe, so as to cry “*Abba, FATHER*,” how can such a Consideration sway our Hearts?—Nay; upon what Principles can such a Person address Himself to discharge any Office of the *christian* Life? We are to *abound in the Works of the LORD*, from the animating Prospect of a glorious Resurrection ‡. This He cannot do; because He apprehends Himself to have no Lot or Portion in the blessed Hope.—We are to open our Hands in Charity to others, from a View of that heavenly Kingdom, which was prepared for Us from the Foundation of the World || :

We are to cleanse Ourselves from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, on account of those precious Promises, which are freely given to Us in *CHRIST JESUS* § : but where unbelieving Doubts predominate, these endearing and invigorating Motives are lost. The Man has no Interest in the encouraging Promises, has no Title to the blissful Inheritance; consequently, these Sinews of evangelical Obedience,

—withdraw my slighted Mercy? deny my despised Assistance? This would be the Manner of human Procedure. But the *LORD*’s Ways are not as Man’s Ways. His Long-suffering triumphs over our Perverseness. Therefore, He says, “I will not turn away from them in Displeasure; I will even wait for them, and wait upon them, till they see their Error, and accept my Favour.” —Amazing Condescension and Goodness! I was going to say. But *divine* Condescension and Goodness are, if I may so speak, infinitely more than amazing.

\* 1 Thess. ii. 12. † Eph. v. 1. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 58.

|| Matt. xxv. 34. § 2 Cor. vii. 1.



ence, with respect to him, are benumbed, withered, dead.

*Ther.* Such a Man may make Prayers and Supplications. Though he cannot rejoice in the Privileges, He may request them at the Throne of Grace.

*Asp.* Prayer is a great Duty, and as great a Privilege. I wish my dear *Theron* the Spirit of Grace and Supplication. This will be better, incomparably better and more advantageous, than a Key to hidden Treasures. But how can You pray with humble Boldness, or with lively Hope, unless You believe? Believe, that *CHRIST* is your High-Priest; is *your* Intercessor with the *FATHER*; and, with the Incense of his infinite Merit, presents *your* Petitions? Then, and then only, can You have, what the Apostle calls, *Boldness and Access with Confidence* \*. Take notice of these vigorous Expressions; and at your Leisure consider, whether they countenance the suspicious and misgiving Temper.—At present observe, how yonder Lark warbles and mounts in the Firmament; as if she was bidding Adieu to the Earth, and going to mingle with the Skies.

Y 3

An

\* *Eph. iii. 12.* Προσῶλη, *Access with a chearing and graceful Assurance*; such as those Petitioners enjoy, who are introduced to the royal Presence, by some distinguished Favourite.—Παρηγοια, *A Boldness or unrestrained Liberty of Speech*; such as Children use, when they present their Addresses, and make known their Requests, to an indulgent Father.—Εν πεποιθησει, *With a well-grounded and steady Confidence*, that We shall obtain both a favourable Acceptance, and a gracious Answer.—And all this, *through the Faith of CHRIST*; through the Worthiness of his Person, and the Prevalence of his Intercession.

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An Image *this*, of believing Prayer! Should a Fowler shoot the soaring Songster through the Wing, how would she fall from her Elevation, and flutter on the Ground! An Emblem *that*, of distrusting Prayer.

I know not how to leave this Subject, without attending to the Testimony of St. *James*: than which, nothing can be more awful, or more decisive, It should really alarm the doubting Disposition, as much as any Solicitation to the most horrid Sin. It should alarm the whole religious World, as much as the Beacons, suddenly kindled and all on a Flame, would alarm the Inhabitants of the maritime Coasts. *Let Him pray in Faith, nothing doubting* \*; for *He that doubteth is like a Wave of the Sea, driven by the Wind, and tossed*. Nay; the Apostle adds—and it is an Addition greatly to be regarded. It should abide with Weight on our Consciences; for it comes from a Casuist, who could neither be too indulgent, through an Excess of Compassion; nor too rigorous, through an Extravagance of Zeal—*let not that Man, the doubting Supplicant think, that He shall receive any Thing of the LORD*.

Never then, my worthy Friend, never more be an Advocate for Doubtings. Pursue them with Fire and  
and

\* *Jam. i. 6. N. B. Nothing doubting*, is the Apostle's Explanation of *Faith*.—*Μηδὲ διακρινόμενος* is, in our Translation, *nothing wavering*. But the very same Expression is rendered, *Acts x. 20. Nothing doubting*. The Sense is, either Way, alike. Though, I think, *Nothing wavering*, corresponds too nearly with the Comparison, *Like a Wave*; makes something of a disagreeable Jingle; and flattens the Force, or supercedes the Necessity, of the following Illustration.

and Sword. Give them no Quarter. Deal with them as *Saul* was commanded to treat the *Ama-  
lekites*.

*Ther.* If we are grieved at the Remembrance of *past Sin*, and feel an Aversion to *all Sin*; if the prevailing Bias of our Affections be to the Divine REDEEMER, and the habitual Breathing of our Souls after a Conformity to his Image; may We not suppose Ourselves possessed of the Truth and Reality, though We have not the Confidence and Rejoicing of Faith? I say *We*; because I apprehend, this is not my peculiar Case, but common to myself, and many other Christians of the weaker Sort. I ask, therefore, in their Name and in my own, May We not humbly suppose our Condition safe? Though We do not presume to use the Language of the Spouse; *My BELOVED is mine, and I am his.*

*Asp.* So You are still inclined to spare *Agag*; because delicately and speciously disguised, under the Appearance of Tendernefs to weak Souls. I should have thought, the Text from St. *James* must have done Execution, like the Prophet *Samuel's* Sword. But since Corrosives succeed not, let Us make trial of Lenitives.

When the great JEHOVAH is pleased to say, *I am the LORD thy GQD*; then, upon this authentic Warrant, to use the Language of the Spouse, is neither more nor less than to declare; "I am  
" persuaded, that *CHRIST* is faithful and true.  
" That he says, what he thinks; and will do, what  
" He says." Whereas, to deny this, by downright

Unbelief; or to question this, by living in Suspense; is not humble Duty, but proud Disobedience. Might not the *LORD JESUS* justly complain, *What Iniquity have Sinners found in Me?* What Unkindness, or what Unfaithfulness, that they are so much afraid of confiding in my Grace, and of believing my Word?

You ask, Whether the State of these Persons is safe, and their Faith real? I answer; Why should not their State be *happy*, and their Faith *assured*? Why should You, or They, or any One, plead the Cause of Unbelief, and veil it with the plausible Pretext of Humility? Let these Persons know, whatever their Names or their Circumstances are, that they have as good a Right to adopt the Words of the Spouse, as We have to walk in these Gardens, and enjoy their refined Delights.—Yet they will do well to remember, that those Qualifications, however amiable, are by no means the *Ground* of their Right. They are to advance their Claim, and hold fast the Blessing, not as Men ornamented with fine Endowments, but as poor, indigent, guilty Sinners. For *such* the SAVIOUR is provided; to *such* his Benefits are proposed; and on *such* his Grace will be magnified.

*Ther.* Do You elude my Question, or give up your Point? One or the other my *Aspasio* certainly does.

*Asp.* Since my Friend so peremptorily affirms, I will not have the ill Manners to deny. I will own the former Charge, the latter I cannot admit. I will own, that, at present, I had much rather act as a Comforter, than as a Disputant. On some other Occasion, I will undertake to consider, and endea-

your



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your to answer, all your Objections.—In the mean time, I am far from giving up the Point, barely by inquiring; Why such Persons should lose their Time, and perhaps embarrass their Minds, in these less profitable Suppositions? When there is a direct, a compendious, and a certain Method of obtaining Peace, by appropriating *CHRIST* and his Merits; without recurring to any such Qualifications.

Nevertheless, if You insist upon a positive Reply, I am obliged to declare, that Faith consists in none of those Qualifications, which You describe. The Language of Faith is not—"I feel such an Aversion; "I am actuated with such a Bias; or I breathe such a Desire." But—"GOD has freely loved me; "*CHRIST* has graciously died for me; and the "*HOLY GHOST* will assuredly sanctify me in "the Belief, the appropriating Belief of these precious Truths \*."

But see, *Theron!* Yonder black and low-hung Cloud points this Way. It seems big with a Shower; it marches on apace; and will soon be over our Heads. We must instantly fly to Shelter.

*Ther.* It is well We have this Summer-house for our Shelter. The thickest Boughs would be insufficient to screen Us. I think, I never saw a more impetuous Burst of Rain. A Shower! No, 'tis a descending *Deluge*. The large, ropy, reeking Drops, come

\* If the Reader finds this Dialogue too long, *here* He will have a convenient Resting-place.

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come down like a Torrent \*.—Surprising ! What a dreadful *Flash* was there ! A Sheet of sulphureous Fire, launched from the dismal Gloom, and wrapping the whole Skies in a Blaze !—Not a Moment's Interval, between the Lightning's Rage, and the Thunder's Roar. How sudden and vast the Explosion ! What a deep, prolonged, tremendous Peal ensues ! It seems as if the Poles of Earth, and the Pillars of Nature cracked !

See,

\* *Come down like a Torrent.*—This is the Import of that strong picturesque Word *זרמו* Psal. lxxvii. 17. In this Manner, *The Clouds poured out Water ; while the Air thundered ; and the Arrows of the ALMIGHTY went abroad.* Mr. Addison, if I remember right, admires the Psalmist's Description of a *Storm at Sea* ; because, it dwells only upon the grand and most striking Circumstances ; without descending, like *Virgil's* enervated Representation, to such little Particulars, as the Cries of Men, and the Noise of Oars. *Clamorque Virum, Stridorque Rudentum.*—This Description of a *Tempest* is, I think, equally admirable on the same Account. The three greatest and most terrible Peculiarities are selected ; and expressed with all the Conciseness, yet with all the Vigour, which Language can unite.

I have not met with any Commentator, who enters into the Spirit of the next Verse. And in our Liturgy Translation, its Majesty sinks into Meanness, its Propriety degenerates into Tautology. Whereas, it is by no means a vain Repetition ; but heightens and enlarges the formidable Idea, by displaying the *Effects* of what had been described, in the foregoing Lines. *The Voice of thy Thunder was in the Heaven ;* the Volleys not only resounded, but resounded from Pole to Pole, and filled *בגלגל* the vast Circumference of the Skies. *The Lightnings lightened the World ;* the Flashes not only shone, but shone far and near, and illuminated the whole World with their Blaze. *The Earth trembled to its Center, and its Inhabitants shook with Horror.*

See, my dear *Aspasio*! See the direful Havock; the horrid Effects of this elementary Tumult.—Yonder Oak, which reared its towering Head aloft, and spread wide its graceful Branches, is, in the Twinkling of an Eye, turned into a *naked Trunk*. There it stands, singed and tore; stripped of its verdant Honours\*, and surrounded with its own shattered Fragments. How fearful is the Artillery of Heaven!

*Asp.* And why—why did not the Blow fall on this guilty Breast? Why was not the fiery Bolt, which flew so near, commissioned to pierce our Hearts?—If our heavenly FATHER has been so tenderly careful of these perishing *Bodies*, will He not be much more gracious to our immortal *Souls*? Will he not clothe them with that immaculate Robe, which is the only Security from the Stroke of eternal Vengeance?—And let me ask, can this be a Security to Us, unless We are vested with it! Could this Building, though very substantial, have secured Us from the rushing Rains, if We had not betaken Ourselves to its friendly Covert!

CHRIST is represented, in the Prophecy of *Isaiah*, by this very Image; as a *Place of Refuge*, and  
as

\* Does not this give Us the most awful and grand Sense of *Psalms xxix. 9*? *The Voice of the LORD*, when uttered in Thunder, and accompanied with Lightning, *יְהוָה יַעֲרֹת*, not discovereth the thick *Busbes*, but strips the *Forests*; lays bare the branching Woods; reduces the most magnificent and flourishing Cedars to naked and withered Trunks.

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*as a Covert from the Storm and from Rain* \*. That is, His Merits and Death are a sure Protection, from the Curse of the Law, and the Damnation of Hell. No Fury of the Elements so terrible as *these*; no Bulwark of Stone so impregnable as *those*.—If this is a proper Emblem of *CHRIST*, to what shall We liken *Faith*? To a Persuasion, that the Shelter of the Summer-house is *free* for our Use? To a high Esteem of its Accommodation, an earnest Desire after its Protection, or an habitual Tendency towards it? —Would this defend Us from the Inclemencies of the Weather? Would this keep Us dry, amidst (what You call) the descending Deluge? Would this Esteem, Desire, or Tendency, unless carried into actual Entrance and Possession, be a proper Safe-guard, or indeed any Manner of Advantage to our Persons?

*Ther.* No, *Aspasio*; neither would a Persuasion that the Summer-house is *mine*.

*Asp.* True: but a Belief that *CHRIST* is mine, is like entering the Summer-house. When the Divine SPIRIT, reveals the obedient and dying SAVI-OUR in my Heart; when I am enabled to believe, that his Death was the Desert of my Sins, and his Obedience is the Matter of my Justification; when I live in the Exercise of this appropriating Faith, then I find that Comfort, and I receive that Benefit, which correspond with the Repose and Security, We now enjoy from this hospitable Structure.

*Ther.* May I then, from this Instant, look upon *CHRIST*, his glorious Person, his perfect Righteousness, and his precious Death, as my *certain* Inheritance?

\* Isa. iv. 6.



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ritance? May I firmly believe, that through this grand immensely meritorious Cause, I shall have Pardon and Acceptance, true Holiness and endless Salvation?

*Asp.* Why should You not believe all this *firmly*? You have the same Reason to believe with a steady Confidence, as to believe with any Degree of Affiance. It is the free Promise of the Gospel, addressed to *Sinners*, that warrants the latter; and the very same Promise, under the same Circumstances of *unmerited* Munificence, authorizes the former.

You have heard my Opinion, hear now what our LORD Himself says; *Let Him that is athirst, come; and whosoever, will, let Him take the Water of Life freely* \*. He may partake of my spiritual and unspeakable Blessings, as freely as He makes use of the most common Refreshments; as freely as He drinks of the running Stream. This is his royal Proclamation.—Hear his gracious Invitation. *Look unto Me, and be ye saved* †; saved from your disquieting Fears, by Justification; saved from your domineering Corruptions, by Sanctification; saved from every Evil, by complete and eternal Redemption. To whom is this most affectionate Call directed? Not to a few distinguished Favourites only, but to *all the Ends of the Earth*. None are excepted; none are prohibited; and can my *Theron* imagine, that *He* is excluded?

Nay farther; Hear our LORD's earnest Intreaty; hear his tender and repeated Importunity;

*As*

\* Rev. xxii. 17.

† Isa. xlv. 22.

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*As though GOD did beseech You by Us; We pray You, in CHRIST's Stead, be yet reconciled to GOD\*.* Hark! 'Tis the Voice of infinitely condescending Love, speaking by his Ambassador—"Sinners, "accept my great Salvation. Enjoy what I have "purchased for You, by my dying Agonies. Do "not suspect my Kindness, or refuse my Gifts. "This will wound me deeper, than the Spear which "pierced my Heart."—O! the Grace of our exalted KING. He bows from his celestial Throne. He almost kneels to his guilty Creatures. He begs, He even begs of obnoxious Sinners, not to reject his Mercies.—After all this, can you entertain the least Doubt, *Theron*, whether you have a Permission to believe firmly?

*Ther.* This is extraordinary Goodness indeed! I have often read these Passages, but never saw them, till this Hour, in a Light so engaging, and so encouraging.

*Asp.* Should not this three-fold Cord be strong enough to draw my dear Friend; let me add (what must absolutely supersede all Objections) the plain, express, peremptory Command of the ALMIGHTY: *This is his Command, that We should believe on the Name of his Son JESUS CHRIST†.* Pray, examine the Language; Not *He allows* only; or *barely advises*; but *commands*. We are not only permitted, but strictly required. It is not only our Privilege, but GOD's positive Injunction.—Upon the Discovery of such a SAVIOUR, methinks every Heart should cry; "O! that I might be allowed to  
" approach

\* 2 Cor. v. 20.

† 1 John iii. 23.

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“ approach him ! To solicit an Interest in Him !  
 “ How gladly would I wait, ever so long a time, in  
 “ ever so mean a Posture, if I might at the last re-  
 “ ceive Him as my Portion ?”—The superabundant  
 Goodness of GOD, prevents our Wishes, and exceeds  
 our Hopes. “ I freely give my SON, saith the  
 “ LORD, and all his Riches to You. I beseech You,  
 “ as a compassionate *Friend*, not to refuse Him. I in-  
 “ join You, as an uncontrollable *Sovereign*, to be-  
 “ lieve on Him.”—How gracious ! most amazingly  
 gracious is this Command ! And give me leave to  
 hint, it is the greatest and most important Command,  
 that ever issued from the Throne of Glory. If this  
 be neglected, no other can be kept ; if this be ob-  
 served, all others will be easy.—Now, *Theron*, will  
 You not receive *CHRIST*, and look upon his all-  
 sufficient Merits, as your own ? Is not your War-  
 rant clear and unexceptionable ? Nay, is not your  
 Obligation strong and indispensable ?

*Ther.* Truly, *Aspasio*, You put all my mistrustful  
 Apprehensions to the Stand. Here is a Proclamation  
 from the blessed GOD—seconded by his Invitation  
 —accompanied by his Intreaty—and all enforced by his  
 Command. I know not what can be a fuller Proof  
 of your Point, or a stronger Inducement to believe.

*Asp.* Yes, my Friend ; I can produce (if such a  
 Thing be possible) stronger Proof still. Such as, I  
 hope, will totally rout Unbelief, and drive all her  
 Forces from the Field.

GOD has not only invited You, intreated You,  
 and commanded You to live under the sweet Persua-  
 sion, that his SON is your SAVIOUR ; but he  
 has given you the grandest *Ratification* of this pre-  
 cious

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cious Truth.—He has passed his Word; He has made You a firm Promise; nay, He has given you *many* and *various* Promises, of this inestimable Blessing. And *GOD is not a Man, that He should lie; or the SON of Man, that he should repent.* Hath He said, and shall He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good\*? Heaven and Earth may drop into Nothing, sooner than one Promise, or indeed one Jot or Tittle of his Promise, should fall to the Ground.

Besides this, He has given You, if I may so speak, a Note under his own Hand. He has *recorded* his Promises in the Bible, and *written* them with an everlasting Pen. So that they will stand conspicuous and indelible, like a Bill drawn upon Heaven, and a Basis laid for Faith, so long as the Sun and Moon endure.

Nay, He has confirmed all, by the most solemn Sanction imaginable; by his *Oath*; by *his own* Oath; by the Oath of a *GOD*. Though his Word is sure, and his Promise immutable, He adds (astonishing Condescension! adorable Benignity!) He adds HIS OATH to all.—He not only speaks, but swears; swears by Himself; swears by his own eternal Existence; that his Promises belong—to *whom*? Mark this Particular with the most exact Attention. To whom do those Promises belong, which are ratified in this unequalled and inviolable Manner?—To the Holy, the Upright, the Accomplished?—To those, says the Scripture, *who fly for Refuge to the*

\* Numb. xxiii. 19.



*the Hope set before them* \*. The Hope set before them in the Propitiation; the Righteousness, the inef-  
fable Merits of *CHRIST*.

*Ther.* May I then believe, firmly believe, assuredly believe, that *JESUS* the Mediator, and all the rich Benefits of his Mediation, are mine? Pardon me, *Aspasio*, for reiterating the Question. I am really, with respect to the Obedience of Faith, too much like that *Saxon* Monarch, who, for his Remissness and Inactivity, was surnamed *The Unready* †.

*Asp.* I do more than pardon my dear *Theron*. I feel for Him, and I sympathize with Him. If there is some of that *Saxon* Prince's Disease runing in his Religion; I am sure, there is too much of it in mine; and I fear, it is an *epidemical* Distemper. But let Us reflect a Moment—Suppose any Neighbour of Substance and Credit, should bind himself by a deliberate *Promise*, to do you some particular piece of Service—if he should add to his Promise a *Note* under his own Hand—if he should corroborate both by some authentic *Pledge*—if he should establish all by a most awful and solemn *Oath*—Could you suspect the Sincerity of his Engagement, or harbour any Doubt with regard to its Execution? This would be *most* unreasonable in any One; and to your generous Temper, I am very certain, it would be impossible.—Let us remember, that *GOD* has given us all this Cause for an Assurance of Faith, and more. Nay; I will defy the most timorous and suspicious Temper, to demand from the *most* treacherous Person on Earth, a greater, stronger,

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fuller

\* Heb. vi. 17, 18.

† *ETHELRED*.

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fuller Security, than the GOD of infinite Fidelity has granted to you and me.—After all this, one would think, Diffidence itself could no longer hesitate, nor the most jealous Incredulity demur. Shall we, can we with-hold that Affiance from the unchangeable CREATOR, which we could not but repose on a fallible Creature?

*Ther.* You rouse and animate me, *Aspasio*. O! that I may arise, and with the divine Assistance, shake off this Stupor of Unbelief! Certainly, it can never be honourable to GOD, nor pleasing to CHRIST, nor profitable to Ourselves.

*Asp.* If it be, then cherish it; maintain it; and never relinquish it.—But how can it be *honourable to GOD*? It depreciates his Goodness; it is a Reproach to his Veracity; nay, the Apostle scruples not to affirm, that it *makes him a Liar* \*. Whereas, they who believe his Testimony, glorify his Faithfulness; glorify his Beneficence; and, as *John* the Baptist speaks, *set to their Seal, that GOD is true* †. —I have been informed, that, when the late *Elect*or of *Hanover* was declared, by the Parliament of *Great-Britain*, Successor to the vacant Throne; several Persons of Distinction waited upon his Highness, in order to make timely Application for the most valuable Preferments. Several Requests of this Nature were granted, and each was confirmed by a kind of promissory Note. One Gentleman, particularly, solicited for the *Mastership* of the *Rolls*. Being indulged in his Desire, he was offered the same Confirmation, which had been vouchsafed to  
other

\* 1 John v. 10.

† John iii. 33.

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other successful Petitioners. Upon which, he seemed to be under a Pang of graceful Confusion and Surprise; begged, that he might not put the royal Donor to such unnecessary Trouble; at the same time protesting, that he looked upon his Highness's *Word*, as the very best Ratification of his Suit.—With this Conduct, and this Compliment, the Elector was not a little pleased. “This is the Gentleman, he said, who does me a real Honour; treats me *like a King*; and whoever is disappointed, He shall certainly be gratified.” So, We are assured by the Testimony of Revelation, that the Patriarch, *who staggered not* through Unbelief, *gave*, and in the most signal, the most acceptable Manner, *Glory to GOD* \*.

Is it *pleasing to CHRIST*?—Quite the reverse. It dishonours his Merit; it detracts from the Dignity of his Rigeteousness; it would enervate the Power of his Intercession. Accordingly you may observe, there is nothing which our LORD so frequently reprov'd in his Followers, as this Spirit of Unbelief.—What says He to his Disciples, when He came down from the Mount of Transfiguration? *O faithless and perverse + Generation!* They were perverse, because faithless.—What says He to the Travelers, whom He overtook in their Journey to *Emmaus*? *O Fools, and slow of Heart*

Z 2

20

\* Rom. iv. 20.

† *Augurium*, Matt. xvii. 17. A believing State of Mind, is like some *well arranged* and beautiful System of Limbs. Unbelief *dislocates* the Parts, *distorts* the harmonious Frame, and disfigures its comely Proportion.

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to believe \*! They were Fools, because slow to believe.—What says He to the Apostles, after his Resurrection? *JESUS upbraided them with their Unbelief* †. He took no notice of their cowardly and perfidious Behaviour; He inveighed against none of their other Follies and Infirmities; but He upbraided them with their Unbelief. Not gently rebuked. No; this was a Fault, so unreasonable in itself, so reproachful to their MASTER, so pernicious to themselves, that He severely reprimanded them for it; with an Air of Vehemence, and with a Mixture of Invective.

Is it profitable to Ourselves?—Nothing less. It damps our Love, and diminishes our Comfort. It subjects Us to that Fear, which hath Torment; and disqualifies Us for that Obedience, which is filial. In a word; this distrustful and unbelieving

\* *Ανοητοι*, Luke xxiv. 25. Not thoughtless, but stupid Creatures; void of Understanding; as we say in English, without common Sense; or, as Horace would have said in Latin,

*O tribus Anticyris Caput insanabile!*

† Mark xvi. 14. The Word is not *ἐπιτιμᾶν*, as in Luke xvii. 3. not *ἐλεγεν*, as in Tit. i. 13. but *ἐνιδίον*. Which signifies, not barely a Rebuke, but a Rebuke accompanied with keen and stinging Reflections; such as may cover the Face with Blushes, and wound the Heart with Anguish.—It is used, by the Evangelist Luke, and by the Apostle Peter, to describe those Calumnies, Invectives, and Reproaches, with which the Persecutors of Christianity endeavoured to gall and afflict the Christians. Luke vi. 22. 1 Pet. iv. 14.—Though our LORD JESUS was most amiably tender and gentle; yet, when Severity was necessary and wholesome, He knew how to be severe. Our all-wise PHYSICIAN could apply the *Cautic*, as well as administer the *Cordial*.



believing Temper weakens every Principle of Piety, and impoverishes the whole Soul.—Whence come spiritual Oscitancy and Remissness? Whence proceed Sterility and Unfruitfulness in the Knowledge of *CHRIST*? St. *Peter* ascribes them all to an habitual Unbelief. Such Persons, he says, *have forgotten that they were purged from their former Sins* \*.—In the Regenerate, where it remains, it is very detrimental; for *they that will not believe shall not be established* †: In the Unregenerate, where it prevails, it is absolutely destructive; and though it may not kill like an Apoplexy, it wastes like a Consumption. *They could not enter in, because of Unbelief* ‡.

Let Us then, my dear Friend, *cast away this Sin*, which so easily besets Us both. It clogs our Feet; it hampers all our Powers; and hinders Us from running, with Alacrity and Speed, *the Race that is set before Us*.—What says *David*? *GOD hath spoken in his Holiness* ||; hath made an expresse and inviolable Promise, that I shall be Ruler of his People *Israel*. *I will rejoice therefore*; away with every alarming Apprehension; I will even exult and triumph. Nay more; *I will divide Shechem, and mete out the Valley of Succoth*; I will look upon the whole Land as my own. I will divide it, and dispose of it, just as if it was already in my Possession.—Why should not you and I also say? *GOD hath spoken in his Holiness*; hath expressly and solemnly declared, *The Promise of an all-sufficient SAVIOUR is to You*. *We will rejoice therefore*; confiding in this most

Z 3

faithful

\* 2 Pet. i. 8, 9.  
† Psal. lx. 6.

‡ Isa. vii. 9.

§ Heb. iii. 19.

faithful Word, We will bid adieu to all disquieting Fears, and make our Boast of this glorious REDEEMER. Yes; notwithstanding all our Unworthiness, *CHRIST* and his Atonement, *CHRIST* and his Righteousness, are ours. *GOD* hath passed his Word; and amidst all our Temptations, his Word is our Anchor; its Hold is firm, and its Ground immoveable\*.

*Ther.* I have heard some People distinguish, between the Faith of *Reliance*, and the Faith of *Assurance*; between the *reflex* and the *direct* Act of Faith. Methinks, I approve these Sentiments, though I dislike the Terms. The Sentiments are happily adapted, to the Relief of human Infirmary; though the Terms are rather too abstruse, for ordinary Capacities to understand.

*Asp.* I cannot say, that I am very fond, either of the one, or of the other. In my Opinion, they both partake too much of the Subtlety of the Schools; and are more likely to create Perplexity, than to administer godly Edifying. For which Reason, I should choose to drop the difficult Phrases, and not to dwell on the nice Distinctions. Yet, if  
We

\* This very important Doctrine is more copiously displayed, in a Sermon of Mr. *Erskine's* on the *Assurance of Faith*, Vol. III. p. 201.—Was I to read, in order to refine my Taste, or improve my Style; I would prefer Bishop *Aitken's* Sermons, Dr *Bates's* Works, or Mr. *Seed's* Discourses. But was I to read, with a single View to the Edification of my Heart, in true Faith, solid Comfort, and evangelical Holiness; I would have recourse to Mr. *Erskine*, and take his Volumes for my Guide, my Companion, and my own familiar Friend.

We must not dismiss them, without some Notice, I would just remark—

That the Faith of *Reliance*, in its true scriptural Sense, includes or presupposes a Degree of Assurance.—*Includes*; for what is Reliance, but a Repose of the Mind, which is attended with Tranquility, and excludes Perturbation? How can this take Place, if there be no Sort of Conviction, That *the LORD is my Light and my Salvation*?—*Presupposes*; for, who would rely on a Satisfaction made, without being persuaded, that the Satisfaction is for Him and his Iniquities? Reliance, separated from this Persuasion, seems to be neither comfortable, nor reasonable.

As to those, who insist upon what they call the *reflex* Act of Faith; sure, they mistake the Nature of the Thing. This, if I understand them aright, is their Way of arguing; “I am a new Creature; “I love the *LORD JESUS* in Sincerity; I have “the Fruits of the *SPIRIT*. From whence it “is plain, that *CHRIST* and his Salvation “are mine.” Now, in all this Procedure, I cannot discern the least Foot-step of Faith; no not the least Trace of receiving a Testimony, or relying upon a SAVIOUR. Here is nothing more than a logical Deduction of one Proposition from another; a Conclusion drawn from given Premises. Grant the latter, and any Person, without any Aid from the *SPIRIT*, will infer the former. It may, therefore, more properly be reckoned an Act of Reasoning, than of Believing; it is founded on what We Ourselves *feel*, not upon the *Record* of a faithful

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faithful GOD; and it is styled, by judicious Writers, the Assurance of *Sense* rather than of Faith.

When, in Conformity to the afore-mentioned Opinion, We are advised to prove our Title to Comfort, by genuine Marks of Conversion; and taught, on this Column to fix the Capital of Assurance; I would rather propose a Question, than advance Objections.—Is not this somewhat like placing the Dome of a Cathedral, upon the Stalk of a Tulip?

*Ther.* No, say They; it was the Practice of the Apostle Himself; and He has left it upon Record, as a Pattern for all Posterity to copy. *We know that We are passed from Death unto Life, because We love the Brethren.*

*Asp.* Observe, *Theron*, the Process of the Apostle's Reasoning. It is like the Form of an inverted Cone; where You have first the Point, and from thence proceed to the Base. So the sacred Writer begins with the less, and ascends to the greater Proof. He says, in one of the following Verses; *Hereby perceive We the Love of GOD\*, because He*  
laid

\* 1 *John* iii. 16. The Word GOD is not in the Original. It was omitted by the Apostle, just as the particular Name is omitted by *Mary*, when She speaks to the Gardener; *Sir, if thou hast borne Him hence*—and by the *Church*, when She addresses the sacred Object of her Affection; *Let Him kiss me with the Kisses of his Mouth*: *John* xx. 15. *Cantic.* i. 1. — In all which Places, there is a Language, a very emphatical Language, even in the Silence. It declares, how deeply the Heart was penetrated, how totally the Thoughts were possessed, by the beloved and illustrious Subject. It expresses also the superlative Dignity and Amiability of the Person meant: as though *He*, and *He alone*, either was, or deserved



*laid down his Life*, not merely for Sinners, but *for Us* in particular.—Here, You see, is Assurance by the direct Act of Faith. From this Truth believed, from this Blessing received, the Love of the Brethren takes its Rise. Which may very justly be admitted as an Evidence, that our Faith is real, and our Assurance no Delusion. As yonder Leaves may serve to distinguish the particular Species, and ascertain the healthy State of the Trees on which they grow.

When your Tenants bring in their Rent, this affords no contemptible Evidence, that the Lands, which they respectively occupy, are yours. But this is a Proof which does not occur, every Day or every Week; it is occasional only, and of the subordinate Kind.—The *grand* Demonstration, that which is always at hand, and always forcible, is, your Possession of the *Deeds* of Conveyance. Thus, the Promise of GOD in his divine Word is our Charter, or the authentic Conveyance of our Right to Pardon and Salvation. Make just the same Difference between this Promise and your own Holiness, as You make between the Writings of your Estate and the Receival of the Revenues, You will then judge aright, because your Judgment will coincide with the Apostle's.

Besides; this Method of seeking Peace and Assurance, I fear, will perplex the Simple-minded; and cherish, rather than suppress, the Fluctuations  
of

served to be, known and admired by *All*. For which Reason, to mention his Name, or display his Excellencies, seemed as *needleless*, as to shew Light to the opened Eye.

of Doubt. For, let the Marks be what you please, a Love of the Brethren, or a Love of all Righteousness, a Change of Heart or an Alteration of Life; these good Qualifications are sometimes like the Stars at Noon-Day, *not easily*, if at all, discernable; or else they are like a Glow-worm in the Night, *glimmering*, rather than shining. Consequently will yield, at the best, but a feeble, at the worst, a very precarious Evidence.—If, in such a manner, We should acquire some little Assurance, how soon may it be unsettled by the Incursions of daily Temptation, or destroyed by the Insurrection of remaining Sin! At such a Juncture, how will it keep its Standing! How retain its Being! It will fare like a tottering Wall, before the Tempest; or be *as the Rush without Mire, and the Flag without Water* \*.

Instead therefore of poring on our own Hearts, to discover, by inherent Qualities, our Interest in *CHRIST*, I should rather renew my Application to the free and faithful Promise of the *LORD*; assert and maintain my Title, on this *unalterable* Ground.—“ Pardon is mine, I would say Grace is mine, *CHRIST* and all his spiritual Blessings are mine. Why? because I am conscious of sanctifying Operations in my own Breast? Rather because *GOD* hath spoken in his Holiness; because all these precious Privileges are consigned over to me in the everlasting Gospel, with a *Clearness* unquestionable as the Truth, with a *Certainty* inviolable as the Oath of *GOD*.”

Cast your Eye into yonder Meadow. Take notice of that industrious *Fisherman*; how intent He is upon

\* Job viii. 11,

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upon the Pursuit of his Business. He has just thrown his Net, and taken a considerable Booty. You do not see Him spending his Time in idle Triumphs, on account of his Success. He does not stand to measure the Dimensions of the Fish, or compute the Value of his Prize. But having, without Delay, secured the Captives; He prepares for *another* Cast, and hopes for *another* Draught.

So let Us, instead of exulting in any past Acquisitions, seek afresh to the inexhaustible Fulness of our SAVIOUR, for renewed Communications. If we have been blessed with any Taste of his Goodness, or any Tokens of his Love, let Us not too fondly dote upon the Sweetness of such Experiences. Let Us not make them the Foundation of our Confidence, but only so many Encouragements to persevere and advance in believing. That, having Life and having Peace from our Divine HEAD, we may have them *more abundantly* \*. Then will be fulfilled the Saying which is written; *The Just, the Righteous in JESUS CHRIST—shall live*, shall not only be delivered from Condemnation and Death, but shall thrive in Comfort, and flourish in Holiness—How? By reflecting on their Sanctification, or viewing their own Attainments? No; but by the infinitely more encouraging Views of their Completeness in CHRIST, and by a fresh, a repeated, a never-ceasing Exercise of Faith †, on that HOLY ONE of GOD.

This, I verily think, nay this, the Apostle testifies, is the *most effectual* Way of feeding that Lamp, and quickening that Flame; which, having cheered  
Us

\* John x. 10.

† Rom. i. 17.

Us in our earthly Pilgrimage, will be brightened up into immortal Glory in the Heavens.

Here they went in; and, after a slight Refreshment, took Coach.—As they were returning Home, *Theron* observed, not without Concern, the changed and melancholy Aspect of Things, in the Territories of the Husbandman. The Fields of Corn, which a little while ago, were gracefully erect, or softly inclining to the Breeze, lay sunk and flated under the impetuous Rains.—Such, added *Aspasio*, such I apprehend will be our Faith, if it aspires not after Assurance, or if its Assurance is erected on any Endowments of our own.

*Ther.* If this is the Case, what can be the Reason, why so many People are totally destitute of all religious Assurance? Have no Notion of it, much less aspire after it? And as to *full Assurance*, they would be much surprised, perhaps highly disgusted, at the very Mention of such a Doctrine.

*Asp.* If People never aspire after the Assurance of Faith, or an *appropriating Interest* in *CHRIST*, I very much question, whether they are truly awakened, or really in earnest. They are like the Men of *Ephraim*, whom the Prophet styles *a Cake not turned* \*; neither Bread, nor yet Dough; neither absolute Reprobates, nor real Saints. Or, as our LORD explains the Proverb, in his Charge against the Church of *Laodicea*, They are *neither hot nor cold* †; not frozen in Insensibility, 'tis true; at the same Time, not fervent in Spirit; but indiffe-

rent

\* Hos. vii. 8.

† Rev. iii. 15.



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rent and lukewarm in the Concerns of Religion.—As to a *full* Assurance, or the highest Degree of this Grace, was I to declare myself more explicitly upon this Point, it should be in the calm and moderate Words of a judicious Divine; “ I do not affirm  
“ that, without a *full* Assurance, there is no Faith.  
“ But this I maintain, that, where-ever the latter  
“ exists, there will be a sincere Pursuit of the  
“ former.”

Among the Reasons, why so few Persons attain this eminent Blessing, We may reckon the following.—They understand not the perfect *Freeneſs* of Grace, nor the *immense* Merits of *CHRIST*.—They never consider the unspeakable *Value* of an assured Faith; neither are they aware, that it is intended for the Enjoyment of *Sinners*.—Either they seek it not all; or else they seek it, where it is not to be found; from some Works of Righteousness in themselves, rather than from the gracious Promise of *GOD* in his Word. Which is altogether as ill judged, and as sure to issue in Disappointment, as if a Person should go in quest of Ice amidst the torrid Zone, or expect to find spicy Islands under the northern Pole.

But whether People consider it or no, the Value of an assured Faith is indeed unspeakable. When this is wrought in the Heart, Peace will stand firm, and Afflictions drop their Sting. Prayer will return laden with Treasures, and Death will approach striped of its Terrors. The Soul will be *as a watered Garden*, and all her Graces *bloſſom as a Rose*.—When this is wrought in the Heart, the Gospel of *CHRIST*, will appear with new Charms, and  
operate

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operate with new Energy. Its Hymns will no longer be a strange Language to your Ear, nor its Privileges as forbidden Fruit to your Palate. You will then, as You peruse each sacred Page, feel it to be the Power of GOD, and *taste that the LORD is gracious* \*. You will reap a Benefit, and enjoy a Delight, as much superior to those of the doubting Reader, as the Pleasure of *eating* this delicious Peach is superior to the mere Description of its agreeable Relish.

Bear with me a Moment longer, *Theron*. For You can hardly imagine, what an Improvement and Exaltation this will give, to every *Truth* You contemplate, and every *Object* You behold.—When You contemplate the Rise of Kingdoms, and the Fall of Empires; when You recollect the many great and astonishing Events, recorded in the History of Nations; how highly delightful must it be to say, “All these passed under the Superintendency of *that Hand*, which was pierced with the bloody Nail, and fastened to the cursed Cross for Me.”—When You behold the Magnificence of Creation, and the Richness of its Furniture; the Grandeur of Nature, and the Variety of her Works; what a heightened Pleasure must they all impart, if, as You view the glorious Scene, your Thoughts make Answer to your Eyes; “All these were brought into Existence by *that adorable PERSON*, who sustained my Guilt, and wrought out my justifying Righteousness.”

O!

\* 1 Pet. ii. 3.

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O! that We may possess this *precious Faith* \*! That it may grow incessantly, grow exceedingly †! Till it be rooted ~~in~~ those full-grown Oaks, under which We lately walked! and grounded ‡, like that well-built Edifice, which is still in our View!

*Ther.* I join with my *Aspasio* in this Wish; and must beg of Him to inform me, how I may attain so desirable a Blessing.

*Asp.* You have intirely cured me, *Theron*, of making Apologies: Would to GOD, I might be as successfully instrumental, in delivering my Friend from his Doubts! That the Gospel might come to Us, as it came to the *Thessalonians*, not in Word only, but in Power, and in the HOLY GHOST, and in much Assurance ||!

*Prayer* is the first Expedient. Every good Gift is from above, and cometh down from the FATHER of Lights. *CHRIST* is not only the Object, but the Author and Finisher of our Faith. *LORD*, increase our Faith, was the Request of the Disciples, and should be the prevailing Language of our Hearts.

Lay up many of the divine *Promises* in your Memory. Stock that noble Cabinet with this invaluable Treasure. *Faith* cometh by hearing §, by meditating

\* 2 Pet. i. 1.

† 2 Thess. i. 3.

‡ Rooted and grounded, *εγγεωμενοι και τεθεμελιωμενοι*. These are the Apostle's beautiful Ideas, or rather expressive Similitudes, each comprehended in a single Word. *Eph.* iii. 18.

|| 1 Thess. i. 5.

§ *Rom.* x. 17. On which Account the Scriptures are styled, *The Words of Faith*, 1 *Tim.* iv. 6.

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tating on, by praying over, this Word of Life, and Word of Grace.—And never, never forget the *Free-ness*, with which the Promise is made, and its good Things are bestowed. You are to receive the one, and apply the other, not with a full, but with an empty Hand; not as a righteous Person, but as an unworthy Creature.

*Make the Trial.* Exercise Yourself in this great Secret of true Godliness. I am satisfied, it will be productive of the most beneficial Effects.—Look unto *JESUS* as dying in *your* Stead, and purchasing both Grace and Glory for *your* Enjoyment. Come unto *GOD*, as a poor Sinner, yet with a *confident* Dependence; expecting all spiritual Blessings, through *HIM* that loved *You*, and gave Himself for *You*.—*He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *shall not be confounded*\*, nor frustrated in his Expectations. *He that believeth*, with this appropriating Faith, *shall have the Witness in himself*†. Nothing will bring in such Light and Peace, such Holiness and Happiness to his Soul.—The *Ephesians*, thus believing, *were sealed with that Holy SPIRIT of Promise*‡. The dispersed of *Israel*, thus believing, *rejoiced with Joy unspeakable* ||. Those were marked out as rightful Heirs, These were blessed with some delightful Foretastes,

\* 1 Pet. ii. 6.

† 1 John v. 10.

‡ *Eph. i. 13.* Πιστωσάντες, ὁφθαλμοῖς, not *After that Ye believed, Ye were sealed*; but *Believing Ye were sealed*. In the Way of Believing, Ye became Partakers of this sealing and sanctifying SPIRIT. Conformably to the Exposition of the Apostle on another Occasion, *Received Ye the SPIRIT, by the Works of the Law, or by the Hearing of Faith?*

|| 1 Pet. i. 8.



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*Forerasters*, and both were prepared for the complete Fruition, of Life and Immortality. O! that We may be *Followers of their Example*, and *Sharers of their Felicity*!

As for those Doubts, which have given You so much Perplexity, and cost Us so long a Disquisition, look upon them as some of your *greatest Enemies*. Oppose them, with all the Resolution and all the Vigour of your Mind.—Nay; look upon those unreasonable Doubts, as some of your *greatest Sins*. Confess them, with the deepest Shame; and pray against them, with the utmost Ardour.—With equal Assiduity and Zeal, let Us press after a stedfast, an immoveable, a triumphant Faith.—Faith is the Vehicle and the Instrument of every Good; *All Things are possible to Him that believeth* \*.—Faith is the immediate and grand End of the whole Gospel; *These Things are written, that Ye might believe* †.—Let Us therefore covet, earnestly let Us covet this best of Gifts, and *shew all Diligence to the FULL ASSURANCE of Hope* ‡.

\* Mark ix. 23. † John xx. 31. ‡ Heb. vii. 11.





## DIALOGUE XVII.

**T**HE next Morning, *Theron* ordered a cold Collation to be prepared, and his Pleasure-Boat to hold itself in Readiness.—Breakfast being dispatched, and some necessary Orders, relating to the Family, given—Now, says He to *Aspasio*, let me fulfil my Promise ; or rather let us execute our mutual Engagement ; and consign the Remainder of this mild and charming Day, to a rural Excursion.

We will take our Route along one of the *finest Roads* in the World. A Road, incomparably more curious and durable, than the famous Causeys raised by those puissant Hands, which conquered the Globe. A Road, which has subsisted from the Beginning of Time ; and, though frequented by innumerable Carriages, laden with the heaviest Burdens, has never been gulled, never wanted Repair, to this very Hour.—Upon this, they step into the Chariot, and are conveyed to a large *navigable River*, about three Quarters of a Mile distant from the House.—Here

they

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they launch upon a new Element, attended by two or three Servants, expert at handling the Oar, and managing the Nets.

Is this the Road, replied *Aspasio*, on which my Friend bestows his Panegyric? It is indeed more curious in its Structure, and more durable in its Substance, than the celebrated *Roman Causeys*. Though I must assure you, the latter have a very distinguished Share of my Esteem. I admire them far beyond *Trajan's Pillar*, or *Caracalla's Baths*; far beyond the idle Pomp of the *Pantheon*, or the worse than idle Magnificence of the *Ampitheatre*. They do the truest Honour to the Empire; because, while they were the Glory of *Rome*, they were a general Good\*; and not only a Monument of her Grandeur, but a Benefit to Mankind.

But more than all these Works, I admire that excellent and divinely gracious Purpose, to which Providence made the Empire itself subservient. It was a kind of Road or Causey, for the everlasting Gospel; and afforded the Word of Life a free Passage, to the very Ends of the Earth. The *evangelical Dove* mounted the Wings of the *Roman Eagle*; and flew, with surprising Expedition, through all Nations.—Who would have thought, that insatiable Ambition and the most bloody Wars, should be

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\* These Roads ran through all *Italy*, and stretched themselves into the Territories of *France*. They were carried across the *Alps*, the *Pyrenean Mountains*, and through the whole Kingdom of *Spain*. Some of them, towards the South, reached even to *Æthiopia*; and some of them, towards the North, extended as far as *Scotland*. The Remains of several of them continue in *England* to this Day; though they were made, it is probable, above 1600 Years ago.



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paving a Way for the PRINCE of Humility and Peace? How remote from all human Apprehension, was such a Design; and how contrary to the natural Result of Things, was such an Event! Most remarkably therefore was that Observation of the Psalmist verified; *His Ways are in the Sea, and his Paths in the great Waters, and his Footsteps are not known* \*.

Conversing on such agreeable Subjects, they were carried by the Stream, through no less agreeable Scenes. They pass by Hills, clothed with hanging Woods; and Woods, arrayed in varying Green. Here, excluded from a Sight of the outstretched Plains, they are entertained with a Group of *unsubstantial* Images, and the Wonders of a *mimic* Creation.—Another Sun shines, but stript of his blazing Beams, in the watery Concave: while Clouds sail along the downward Skies, and sometimes disclose, sometimes draw a Veil over, the radiant Orb. Trees, with their inverted Tops, either flourish in the fair Serene below; or else paint, with a pleasing Delusion, the pellucid Flood. Even the Mountains are there, but in a headlong Posture; and, notwithstanding their prodigious Bulk, they quiver in this floating Mirror, like the poplar Leaves which adorn their Sides.

Soon as the Boat advances, and disturbs the placid Surface; the Waves, pushed hastily to the Bank, bear off, in broken Fragments, the *liquid Land scape*. The spreading Circles seemed to prophecy, as they rolled; and pronounced the Pleasures of this present State—the Pomp of Power, the Charm of Beauty, and



# DIALOGUE XVII. 373

and the Echo of Fame—pronounced them *transient* as their speedy Passage; *empty*, as their unreal Freight.—Seemed to prophecy? It was more. Imagination heard them utter, as they ran;

*Thus pass the shadowy Scenes of Life away!*

Emerging from this fluid Alley, they dart amidst the Level of a spacious Meadow. The Eye, lately *immured*, though in pleasurable Confinement, now expands her delighted View, into a Space almost boundless, and amidst Objects little short of innumerable.—Transported for a while, at the numberless Variety of beauteous Images, poured in sweet Confusion all around, she hardly knows, where to fix, or which to pursue. Recovering, at length, from the pleasing Perplexity; she glances, quick and instantaneous, across all the intermediate Plain, and marks the distant *Mountains*. How Cliffs climb over Cliffs, till the huge Ridges gain upon the Sky: how their diminished Tops are dressed in Blue, or wrapped in Clouds: while all their leafy Structures, and all their fleecy Tenants, are lost in Air.

Soon she quits these aerial Summits, and ranges the russet *Heath*: here, shagged with Brakes, or tufted with Rushes: there, interspersed with straggling Thickets, or solitary Trees; which seem, like disaffected Partisans, to shun each other's Shade.—A *Spire*, placed in a remote Valley, peeps over the Hills. *Sense* is surprised at the amusive Appearance; is ready to suspect, that the Column rises, like some enchanted Edifice, from the rifted Earth. But *Reason* looks upon it, as the Earnest of a hidden Vale, and the sure Indication of an adjacent Town.

Performing, in this Respect, much the same Office to the Eye, as *Faith* executes with regard to the Soul, when it is *the Evidence of Things not seen* \*.

Next, she roves, with increasing Pleasure, over spacious Tracts of fertile Glebe, and cultured *Fields*. Where Cattle, of every graceful Form, and every valuable Quality, crop the tender Herb, or drink the crystal Rills.—Anon, she dwells with the utmost Complacency, on *Towns* of Opulence and Splendor; which spread the sacred Dome, and lift the social Roof. Towns, no longer surrounded with the stern forbidding Majesty, of unpassable Intrenchments, and impregnable Ramparts; but incircled with the delicate, the inviting Appendages of Gardens and Orchards: *those*, decked with all the soft Graces of Art and Elegance; *these*, blushing and pregnant with the more substantial Treasures of fruitful Nature.—Wreaths of ascending Smoke, intermingled with Turrets and lofty Pinnacles, seem to contend which shall get *farthest* from the Earth, and *nearest* to the Skies. Happy for the Inhabitants! If such was the habitual Tendency of their Desires †; if no other Contention was known in their Streets.

Villas,

\* Heb. xi. 1.

† This Comparison, I think, cannot appear vulgar to those Persons, who have read, and who reverence, *The Book of Canticles*. There, the Church, ascending continually in devout Affections, to her beloved JESUS, and to her heavenly Home, is characterized by this very Similitude. *Who is this that cometh out of the Wilderness like Pillars of Smoke?* Cant. iii. 6.—Though it must be confessed, that this Similitude, like many of the Illustrations used in Scripture, might have a Sort of local Propriety;

*Villas*, elegant and magnificent, seated in the Center of an ample Park, or removed to the Extremity of a lengthened Lawn: not far from a beautiful Reservoir of standing Waters, or the more salutary Lapse of a limpid Stream.—*Villages*, clad in homely Thatch, and lodged in the Bosom of clustering Trees. Rustics, singing at their Works; Shepherds, tuning their Pipes, as they tend their Flocks; Travelers, pursuing each his respective Way, in easy and joyous Security.

How pleasing, said *Aspasio*, is our Situation! How delightful is the Aspect of all Things! One would almost imagine, that nothing could exceed it, and

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Propriety; peculiar to the People of that Age, Country, and Religion. It might probably refer to those Columns of Smoke, which arose from the *Burnt-offering*, or fumed from the Altar of *Incense*. If so, this Circumstance must give a Solemnity and Dignity to the Idea, of which many Readers are not at all aware, and which indeed no modern Reader can fully conceive.

May I take leave to mention another Comparison of this Kind? *The Enemies of the LORD shall consume as the Fat of Lambs; yea, even as the Smoke shall they consume away.* Psal. xxxvii. 20.—As the Fat of Lambs, is not to Us a striking Representation. But to those who attended the Altar, who saw the unctuous and most combustible Parts of the Victim blazing in the sacred Fire, it presented a very lively Image. Which was still more apposite and significant, if this *Psalms* was sung, while the Sacrifice was burning.—None I believe, in such a Case, could forbear either observing or admiring the beautiful *Gradation*: “They shall perish as yonder Fat, “ which is so easily set on fire; and, when once in a “ Flame, is so speedily consumed. Nay, they shall be “ as the *Smoke*, which is still more transient. Whose “ light unsubstantial Wreaths, but just make their Appearance to the Eye; and, in a Moment, vanish into “ empty Air.”



that nothing can increase it. Yet there is a Method of *increasing* even this copious Delight, and of *brightening* even this exquisite Pleasure.—Let me desire my Friend, answered *Theron*, to explain his Remark; and not only to explain, but to exemplify.—If We view, resumed *Aspasio*, our own *prosperous*, and compare it with the *afflicted* Condition of Others, the Method I propose, will be reduced to Practice. Such a dark and mournful Contrast, must throw additional Brightness, even upon the brightest Scene.

Above, the Skies smile with Serenity; below, the Fields look gay with Plenty; all around, the sportive Gales

*Fanning their odoriferous Wings, dispense  
Native Perfumes; and whisper, whence they stole  
Those balmy Spoils †.*

With Us all Circumstances are as *easy*, as the Wafture of the Boat; as *smooth*, as the Flow of the Stream.—But let Us not forget those grievous Calamities, which befall our Brethren, in some remote Tracts of the Earth, or distant Parts of the Ocean. How many Sailors are struggling, vainly struggling, with all the Fury of rending Winds, and dashing Waves! While their Vessel, flung to and fro by *tempestuous* Billows, is mounted into the Clouds, or plunged in the Abyss. Possibly, the miserable Crew hear their Knell sounded, in the shattered Mast; and see Destruction entering, at the bursting Planks. Perhaps, this very Moment, they pour the last, dismal, dying Shriek; and sink, irrecoverably sink, in the all-overwhelming Surge.—

The



The Traveler, in *Africa's* barren Wastes, pale even amidst those glowing Regions, pale with prodigious Consternation, sees sudden and surprising Mountains rise. Sees the sultry Desert, ascending the Sky, and sweeping before the Whirlwind. What can he do? Whither fly? How escape the approaching Ruin? Alas! while He attempts to rally his Thoughts; attempts to devise some feeble Expedient; He is overtaken by the choking Storm, and suffocated amidst the *sandy Inundation*. The driving Heaps are, now, his Executioner; as the drifted Heaps will, soon, be his Tomb.

While *We* possess the valuable Privileges, and taste the delicious Sweets of *Liberty*, how many Partakers of our common Nature, are condemned to perpetual Exile, or chained to the Oar for Life! How many are immured in the Gloom of Dungeons, or buried in the Caverns of the Mines; never to behold the all-inlivening Sun again!—While Respect waits upon our Persons, and Reputation attends our Characters: are there not some unhappy Creatures, led forth by the Hand of *vindictive Justice*, to be Spectacles of Horror, and Monuments of Vengeance? Sentenced, for their enormous Crimes, to be broke Limb by Limb on the Wheel, or to be impaled alive on the lingering Stake. To these, the strangling Cord, or the deadly Stab, would be a most welcome Favour. But they must feel a *thousand Deaths*, in undergoing *one*. And this, too probably, is but the Beginning of their Sorrows; will only consign them over to infinitely more terrible Torment.

While

While Ease and Pleasure, in sweet Conjunction, smooth our Paths, and soften our Couch : how many are tossing on the Fever's fiery Bed, or toiling along Affliction's thorny Road ! Some, under the *excruating*, but necessary Operations of Surgery : their Bodies ripped open, with a dreadful Incision, to search for the torturing Stone ; or their Limbs loped off by the bloody Knife, to prevent the Mortification's fatal Spread. Some *emaciated* by pining Sickness, are deprived of all their animal Vigour ; and transformed into Spectres, even before their Dissolution \*. These are ready to adopt the Complaint of the *Psalmist* ; *I am withered like Grass ; my Bones are burnt up, as it were a Firebrand ; I go hence like the Shadow that departeth*. While Health, that staple Blessing ; which gives every other Entertainment its Flavour and its Beauty ; adds the Gloss to all We see, and the Gout to all we taste ; Health plays at our Hearts ; dances in our Spirits ; and mantles in our Cheeks, as the generous Champain lately sparkled in our Glass.

We are blest with a calm Possession of Ourselves ; with Tranquility in our Consciences, and an habitual Harmony in our Temper. Whereas Many, in the doleful Cells of Lunacy, are gnashing their Teeth or wringing their Hands ; rending the Air with Volleys of horrid Execrations, or burdening it with Peals of disconsolate Sighs. And O ! what Multitudes, even amidst Courts and Palaces, are held in *splendid Vassalage*, by their own domineering Passions, or the Vanities

\* A very little Excursion of Thought will easily convince the Reader, that there is no Period of Time, in which some of these Calamities do not befall our Fellow-creatures, in one Part of the World or another.

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Vanities of a bewitching World. Far less innocently, far more deplorably disordered \*, than the fettered Madman, they are gnawed by the inveterate Tooth of Envy; they are agitated by the wild Sallies of Ambition; or feel the malignant Ulcer of Jealousy, rankling in their Breasts. In Some, Avarice, like a ravening Harpy, gripes. In Some, Revenge, like an implacable Fury rages. While Others are goaded by lordly and imperious Lusts, through the loathsome Sewers of impure Delight; and left, at last, in those hated and execrable Dens, where Remorse rears her snaky Crest, and Infamy sharpens her hissing Tongue. — — —

Why this long Pause? replied *Theron*. Your Observations are as useful, as they are just. We should all be acquainted, at least in Speculation acquainted, with Grief; and send our Thoughts, if not our Feet, to visit the Abodes of Sorrow.—That, in this School, We may learn a sympathising Pity, for

\* Give me any Plague, says an apocryphal Writer, but the Plague of the Heart, *Ecclus. xxv. 13*. Upon which judicious and weighty Apothegm, *Mafinissa's* Speech in *Mr. Thomson's Sophonisba*, is a very pertinent and affecting Paraphrase.

O! save me from the Tumult of the Soul!  
From the wild Beast within!—For, circling Sands,  
When the swift Whirlwind whelms them o'er the Lands;  
The roaring Deeps, that to the Clouds arise,  
While thwarting thick the mingled Lightning flies;  
The Monster-brood, to which this Land gives Birth,  
The blazing City, and the gaping Earth;  
All Deaths, all Tortures in one Pang combin'd,  
Are gentle to the Tempest of the Mind.



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for our distressed Fellow-creatures; and see, in this Glass, our inexpressible Obligations to the distinguishing Goodness of Providence. Which has crowned our Table with Abundance, and replenished our Cup with Delicacies; permitting neither Penury to stint the Draught, nor Adversity to mingle her Gall.—Go on, I must intreat You, with your Description of *comparative Felicity*. We have a large Circuit still to make, before We arrive at our intended Port. And I could wish, that your Discourse might keep pace with the Current.

Since You approve the Subject, answered *Aspasio*, I will pursue it a little farther.—We, the Inhabitants of this favoured Isle, breathe an Air of the most agreeable Temperature, and most *wholsome* Qualities. But how many Nations languish under brazen Skies, vaulted as it were with Fire? They welter amidst those Furnaces of the Sun, till their “Visage” is burnt, and black as a Coal\*.—What is far more disastrous, Beds of Sulphur and combustible Materials, lie in subterraneous Ambush, ready to spring the irresistible Mine. Ere long—perhaps, on some Day of universal Festivity †, or in some Night of

\* Lam. iv. 8.

† There is a remarkable Passage in *Psal. lvi. 9.* which seems to denote some such *unexpected*, but *speedy* and *inevitable* Doom. The Sense is darkened, not a little, by the Version admitted into our Liturgy. I believe, the true Translation may be seen in the following *Italics*, and the true Meaning learnt from the *interwoven* Paraphrase.—Speedily, or before your Pots can perceive the Warmth of blazing Thorns, shall HE that ruleth over all, sweep away the Wicked: sweep him away by a Stroke of righteous Indignation, as by a fierce and mighty Tempest; so that, even from the Fulness of his Sufficiency, and the Height



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of deep Repose—to be touched by Heaven's avenging Hand.—Then, with what outrageous Violence will they burst! Rock the Foundations of Nature! Wrench open the ponderous Jaws of Earth! And swallow up astonished Cities, in the dark, tremendous, closing Chasm!

These *Earthquakes*, it may be, both precede and portend, the *Pestilence that walketh in Darkness*, and the *Sickness that destroyeth at Noon-day* \*. They are, at once, a fearful Omen, and a ruinous Blow. The stagnating Atmosphere, rank with malignant Vapours, becomes a Source of deadly Infection: or, replete with poisonous Animalcules, is one vast incumbent Cloud of *living Bane*. If the active Gales arise, they arise only to stir the Seeds of Disease, and diffuse the fatal Contagion far and near.—Unhappy People! The *Plague*, that severe Minister of divine Indignation, fixes her Head-quarters in their blasted Provinces; and sends Death abroad, on his pale Horse†, to empty their Houses, depopulate their Towns, and crowd their Graves.

Our Island is seldom visited with either of these dreadful Judgments; and has never sustained any very considerable Calamity from the former. However, let Us not be presumptuously secure. We have, not long

Height of his *Prosperity*, He shall be plunged into utter Destruction.—The Word *†*, which is very unhappily rendered *raw*, signifies a State of *Prosperity* or *pleasurable Enjoyment*. 1 Sam. xxv. 6.—The whole Verse, in a Gradation of striking Images, gives Us a most awful Display of divine Vengeance. Vengeance quite sudden; utterly irresistible; and overtaking the secure Sinner, amidst all the Caresses of, what the World calls, *Fortune*.

\* Psal. xci. 6.

† Rev. vi. 8.

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long ago, received an awful Warning. The Rod has been shaken, or rather the Sword has been brandished, over our Territories.—Who can forget the general Consternation, which seized our *Metropolis*, on Occasion of the late Earthquake? And not without Reason. For, of all divine Visitations, this is the most terribly vindictive. The Whirlwind is *slow* in its Progress; War is *gentle* in its Assaults; even the raging Pestilence is a *mild* Rebuke; compared with the inevitable, the *all-overwhelming* Fury of an Earthquake. When it begins, it also makes an End\*. Puts a Period, in a few Minutes, to the Work of Ages. Ruins all, without Distinction; and there is no Defence from the destructive Stroke.

Should almighty Vengeance stir up again those fierce subterranean Commotions: should the most high GOD bid strong Convulsions tear the Bowels of Nature, and make the Foundations of the World tremble like a Leaf: What, *O ye careless ones*†, What will You do? Whither will You fly? —See! the Pavement sinks under your Feet. Your Houses are tottering over your Heads. The Ground, on every Side, cracks and opens like a gaping Grave; or heaves and swells like a rolling Sea. *A Noise of Crashing* ‡ is heard from without, occasioned by the rending Streets, and falling Structures. Thunders, infernal Thunders||, bellow from beneath; mingled with despairing Shrieks, and dying Groans from those wretched

\* 1 Sam. iii. 12. † Isa. xxxii. 11. ‡ Zeph. i. 10.

|| Before the Overthrow of *Catania* by an Earthquake, a Noise was heard, vast and horrid, as if all the Artillery in the World was discharged at once.

wretched Creatures, who are jammed between the closing Earth, or going down alive into the horrible Pit\*.—Where now will You fly? To your strong Towers?

\* Very memorable, and equally tremendous, is the Account of the Earthquake, that visited *Sicily*, in the Year 1693.—It shook the whole Island. The Mischief it caused, is amazing. Fifty-four Cities and Towns, beside an incredible Number of Villages, were either demolished, or greatly damaged. *Catania*, one of the most famous and flourishing Cities in the Kingdom, was entirely destroyed. Of 18,914 Inhabitants, 18,000 perished.

Another Earthquake almost as dreadful, and in the same Year, spread Desolation through the Colony of *Jamaica*. In two Minutes Time, it shook down, and laid under Water, nine Tenths of the Town of *Port-royal*. In less than a Minute, three Quarters of the Houses, and the Ground they stood on, together with the Inhabitants, were quite sunk: and the little Part left behind, was no better than Heaps of Rubbish.—The Shake was so violent, that it threw People down upon their Knees, or their Faces, as they were running about for Shelter. The Ground heaved and swelled, like a rolling Sea; and several Houses, still standing, were shuffled some Yards out of their Places. The Earth would crack and yawn; would open and shut, quick and fast. Of which horrid Openings, two or three hundred might be seen at once. In some whereof, the People went down, and were seen no more. In some they descended, and rose again in other Streets, or in the Middle of the Harbour. Some swiftly closing, seized the miserable Creatures, and pressed them to Death; leaving their Heads, or Half their Bodies above Ground, to be a Spectacle of Terror, and a Prey to Dogs. Out of others would issue whole Rivers of Water, spouted to a great Height in the Air, and threatening a Deluge to that Part, which the Earthquake spared—Scarce a Planting-house or Sugar-work was left standing in all the Island. Two thousand Lives were lost, and a thousand Acres of Land sunk. The whole



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Towers? They are shattered in Pieces.—To the stronger Rocks? They are thrown out of their Place.—To the open Fields? They are a frightful Gulph, yawning to devour You.—Where-ever You fly; in the Wildness of your Distraction, where-ever you seek for Shelter: It shall be, *as if a Man fled from a Lion, and a Bear met Him; or went into the House, and leaned his Hand upon the Wall, and a Serpent bit Him* \*.

Yet, there is *one* Place of Refuge, which will prove an inviolable Sanctuary, and a perfect Security. I mean, the great, the gracious, the adorable REDEEMER's Righteousness. Hither let Us betake ourselves. Now, before the Day of Desolation cometh, let us betake Ourselves to *this Stronghold*. Then, shall We have no Reason to fear, though the Earth be moved, and though the Hills be carried into the Midst of the Sea. For thus saith GOD, the omnipotent and faithful GOD; *The Sun and the Moon shall be darkened, and the Stars shall withdraw their Shining. The LORD also shall rear out of Sion, and utter his Voice from Jerusalem, The Heavens and the Earth shall shake; but the LORD JESUS CHRIST, will be the Hope of his People, and the Strength of the Children of Israel* †.—Or, if the true Believer is involved, in the same undistinguished Ruin with the Ungodly; even

whole was attended with frightful Noises, with Brimstone Blasts, and offensive Smells. The noisome Vapours belched forth, corrupted the Air, and brought on a general Sickness; which swept away more than three thousand of those, who escaped the Fury of the Earthquake. See CHAMB. Dict. on the Word Earthquake.

\* Amos v. 19.

† Joel iii. 15, 16.



even this shall turn to his Gain. It shall exempt Him from the lingering Pains, and the melancholy Solemnities of a dying Bed. Like *Elijah's* fiery Chariot, it shall speedily waft his Soul to the Bosom of his SAVIOUR. While the hideous Cavern, that whelms his Body in the Center, shall be its Chamber of Rest, till the beloved BRIDE-GROOM comes, and the Day of Resurrection dawns.

*We* lift up our Eyes, and behold the radiant Colours, which flush the Forehead of the Morning: We turn, and gaze upon the no less beautiful Tinges, which impurple the Cheek of Evening. We throw around our View, and are delighted with numberless Forms of Fertility, which both decorate and enrich our Plains.—Whereas, other Countries are over-run with immense Swarms of *Locusts*: which intercept, where-ever they fly, the fair Face of Day; and destroy, where-ever they alight, the green Treasures of the Ground.

Ah! what avails it, that the laborious Hind sows his Acres; or the skilful Husbandman prunes his Vineyard? That Spring, with her prolific Moisture, swells the Bud; or with her delicate Pencil, paints the Blossom? Nor Grain, nor Fruit, can hope for Maturity; while these *rapacious* and *baleful* Creatures infest the Neighbourhood. They ravage the Gardens, They strip the Trees, and shave the Meadows. Scarce a single Leaf remains on the Boughs, or so much as a single Stalk in the Furrows. *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth: the Land is as the Garden of Eden*

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*before them, and behind them a desolate Wilderiness: yea, and nothing can escape them* \*.

Now, let the dreadful Artillery rore from all its iron Throats, and disgorge the heaviest Glut of mortal Hail. Now, Ye Sons of Slaughter; Men *skilful to destroy* †; now hurl the sulphureous Globes, which kindle into a Hurricane of Fire, and burst in ragged Instruments of Ruin.—To no Purpose. The linked Thunderbolts are turned into Stubble; the bursting Bombs are accounted as Straw. These Armies of the Air, laugh at all the formidable Preparations of War: *and when they fall on the Sword, they shall not be wounded* ‡—Surprising and awful  
Destination

\* *A Fire devoureth before them, and behind them a Flame burneth*, Joel ii. 3. This is one of those bold and expressive Metaphors, in which the Hebrew Language delights, and by which it is eminently distinguished. It signifies a total Devastation of the vegetable Produce. Such as must ensue, if a raging and resistless Fire attended the Progress of these pernicious Animals: burning with such vehement Impetuosity, that None could quench it; spreading such extensive Havock, that nothing could escape it.

† Ezek. xxi. 31.

‡ The Prophet Joel, foretelling the Plague of Locusts, gives, under the Image of an embattled Host, a most alarming Display, of their terrible Appearance; their impetuous Progress; the horrible Dread they raise, as they advance; and the irreparable Mischief they leave, as they depart. Adding, among other amazing Circumstances, *When they fall upon the Sword, they should not be wounded*. Which implies, I apprehend, that no Method of Slaughter should prove destructive to their Troops; or, that every Expedient, contrived for their Suppression, should be utterly baffled. Being, through their immense Numbers as *invincible*, as if every one was absolutely *invulnerable*. For, though Millions and  
Millions

Destination of the everlasting GOD! At once, to stain the Pride, and chastise the Guilt of Man! These are a despicable and puny Race; clad in no Coat of Mail, but crushed by the slightest Touch. They wear neither Sword, nor Scymeter, nor any offensive Weapon. Yet, in spite of opposing Legions, they carry on their Depredations, and push their Conquests. *Terror* marches in their Front, and *Famine* brings up the Rear. They spread universal Devastation, as they advance; and frequently give the Signal, for the Pestilence to follow. Potent Armies lose their Hands, and haughty Tyrants tremble for their Dominions.

O! that the Natives of *Great-Britain* would bethink themselves! Would break off their Sins by Righteousness, and their Iniquities by cherishing the Influences of the Divine SPIRIT! Lest this *overflowing Scourge* \*, under which some neighbouring Kingdoms

Millions should perish, by the Weapons of War; even such a Blow, in reference to their whole *collective* Body, should scarce be perceived as a Loss, scarce be felt as a Wound; neither diminishing their Strength, nor retarding their March. *Joel ii. 8.*

\* *Overflowing Scourge*, Isa. xxviii. 15. It is the Property of a Scourge to *lash*, of a River to *overflow*. The sacred Writer (by an elegant *ωαρωματισμα*, which beautifies the Original, but cannot be preserved in the Translation) has connected these different Ideas and different Effects. The vindictive Visitation, with which He threatens the disobedient *Jews*, shall *pierce deep* as a Scourge, and *spread wide* as an Inundation. They shall feel it to their very Souls; and it shall involve the whole Nation in Misery, Anguish and Ruin.

There seems to be such a Form of Expression in the Service of our Church. When We pray, in behalf of



Kingdoms have severely smarted, should be commissioned to visit *our* Borders, and avenge the Quarrel of its MAKER's Honour.—Distant as those countless Legions are, with interposing Seas between; yet, if GOD lift up a Standard from far, or but hiss \* unto them from the Ends of the Earth; *they come with Speed swiftly*.—Who will convey this Wish to the Ears, who will transmit it to the Hearts, of my Countrymen? That our Land may always appear, as it does at present, like the Darling of Providence. May always resound with the Voice of Joy, and be filled with the Fruits of Plenty. May always wear the Robe of Beauty, and be adorned with the Smile of Peace.

How great are the Advantages of *Peace*! said *Theron*. Peace at her Leisure plans, and leads out Industry to execute, all the noble and commodious Improvements, which We behold on every Side. Peace sets the Mark of Property on our Possessions, and bids Justice guarantee them to our Enjoyment. Peace spreads over Us the Banner of the Laws, while We taste, free from Outrage, and secure from Injury,

our Fellow-Christians; “*pour upon them the continual Dew of thy Blessing.*” That which may be refreshing and salutary as the Dew, yet copious and abundant as the Shower.

\* *Hiss unto them*. Isa. v. 26. With great Significancy, and peculiar Grandeur, the Prophet applies this Expression to the LORD GOD of Hosts, influencing the most powerful Armies, *q. d.* “They come, without a Moment's Delay, and from the remotest Regions of the Earth, to execute all his Pleasure. Formidable and innumerable as they are, they come—I say not, upon his repeated Injunctions, or at his strict Command—but at the first, the very *smallest* Intimation of his Will.”—Such as the Shepherds used to their Flocks;



Injury, the Milk and Honey of our honest Toil \*. —Amidst the tumultuous Confusions of *War*, who could have a Heart to contrive, or a Hand to accomplish, any such Works of Dignity and Use? In those Days of Darkness and Distraction, how languid to the Sight are all the dewy Landscapes of Spring? How insipid to the Taste are all the delicious Flavours of Autumn?—When the Nation is over-run with Armies, and embroiled in Slaughter, *a trembling Heart, and Failing of Eyes, and Sorrow*

B b 3

Flocks; such as the Bee-men, of old, to their Swarms; or such as We, in these Days, to some of our domestic Animals.—The Hebrew שָׁרָק I would not translate, *At his Whistle*; because this Phrase, in our Language, creates a vulgar Sound, and conveys a low Idea: but such is the Import of the Original, Which denotes all that *unconcerned Ease* of Action, without any of the *offensive Familiarity* of Diction.

\* *Pax optima rerum*, says the *Latin* Poet.—But the *Oriental*s, I think, discover the most superlative Esteem for this Blessing, by making it the constant Form of their Salutations, and the Subject of their most cordial Wishes for their Friends; PEACE BE UNTO THEE.—In this *short Sentence*, they seem to have comprised a *whole Volume* of Mercies: meaning, by their single שְׁלוֹמִי all that the *Greeks* expressed by their χαῖμας, *χαίματα*, *conspicua*; i. e. A Confluence of that Joy of Mind, that Health of Body, that Prosperity of outward Circumstances, which *complete* the Happiness of Mankind.

We have a fine Description of Peace, and its various Blessings, 1 *Maccab.* xiv. 8, 9, &c. The Picture is very exact, though perfectly artless. Nothing should hinder me from transcribing the Passage, but a Fear of being too *diffusive* in my Notes. Lest the Reader, who expects a *Treat*, should complain of a *Glut*: or have Reason to object, that the Side-board is more copiously furnished than the Table.

of Mind\*, are the dismal Distinction of the Times, Instead of a calm Acquiescence in our Portion, our very Life hangs in continual Suspense.

But what are all the Benefits of *external Peace*, though displayed in the fairest Light, and invivified by the strongest Contrasts—What are they all, compared with the Blessings of the Gospel? By which Sinners may have *Peace with GOD through JESUS CHRIST our LORD*.

This, resumed *Assasio*, suggests a fresh Instance of Happiness, which others want, and *We* possess; an Instance, never to be omitted in our Catalogue of peculiar Mercies. I might add, never to be forgotten, by any *Christian*, on any Occasion.—While many Kingdoms of the Earth, are ignorant of the true GOD, and know neither the Principles of Piety, nor the Paths of Felicity; *the Day-spring from on high hath visited Us, to give the Knowledge of Salvation, and to guide our Feet into the Way of Peace*.—While Millions of rebellious Angels, cast from their native Thrones, are reserved in Chains of Darkness, unto the Judgment of the great Day; We, though rebellious and apostate Sinners of Mankind, are delivered from the Wrath to come. The holy *JESUS* (blessed be his redeeming Goodness!) has endured the Cross, and despised the Shame, on purpose to rescue Us from those doleful and ignominious Dungeons; where the Prisoners of Almighty Vengeance

*Converse with Groans,*

*Unrespited, unpitied, unreprieved,*

*Ages of hopeless End †.*

Yes,

Yes, my dear *Theron*; let me repeat your own important Words; “What are all the Benefits of “external Peace, though displayed in the fairest “Light, and invivified by the strongest Contrasts—What are they all, compared with the “*Blessings of the Gospel?*”—This brings the Olive-branch from Heaven, and glad Tidings of Reconciliation with our offended GOD. This composes the Tumult of the Mind; disarms the warring Passions; and regulates the extravagant Desires. This introduces such an Integrity of Heart, and Benevolence of Temper, as constitute the Health of the Soul. This spreads such an uniform Beauty of Holiness through the Conduct, as is far more amiable, than the most engaging Forms of material Nature.

O! that Thou wouldest bow the Heavens! That Thou wouldest come down, *celestial VISITANT*; and make thy stated, thy favourite Abode in our Isle! That every Breast may be animated with thy Power; and every Community, every Individual, may wear thy resplendent Badge! — Then shall it be the *least* Ingredient of our public Felicity, That the Sword of Slaughter is beaten into a Plough-share, and the once bloody Spear bent into a Pruning-hook. It shall be the *lowest* upon the List of our common Blessings, That *Violence is no more heard in our Land, Wasting and Destruction within our Borders. Our very Officers will be Peace, and our Exactors \* Righteousness. We shall call (and the*

\* Isa. lx. 17. *Officers and Exactors signify Persons, vested with public Authority: who have it in their Power,*



the Event will correspond with the Name) *our Walls Salvation, and our Gates Praise*. Then shall every Harp be taken down from the Willows, and every Voice burst into a Song.—“In other Climes”—will be the general Acclamation—

“In other Climes, let Myriads of curious *Insects*,  
 “spin the delicate Thread, which softens into Vel-  
 “vet, stiffens into Brocade, or flows in glossy Sattin;  
 “which reflects a lovelier Glow on the Cheek of  
 “Beauty, and renders Royalty itself more majestic,  
 “We are presented with infinitely *finer Robes*, in the  
 “imputed Righteousness of our REDEEMER,  
 “and the inherent Sanctification of his SPIRIT.  
 “Which beautify the very Soul, and prepare it for  
 “the illustrious Assembly—of Saints in Light—of  
 “Angels in Glory.

“Let eastern Rocks sparkle with Diamonds, and  
 “give Birth to Gems of every dazzling Tincture.  
 “We have, hid in the Field of our Scriptures,  
 “the *Pearl* of great *Price*; the *white* and precious  
 “Stone

Power, to rule with Rigour. But these, instead of abusing their Power, shall conduct the Administration, with all possible Equity and Gentleness; with a *parental* Tenderness, rather than a *magisterial* Austerity. So that, though the Title and Office of an Exactor may remain; nothing of the domineering Insolence, or oppressive Severity, shall continue.—The Prophet, who always delivers his Sentiments with the utmost Emphasis, says; They shall be, not barely *peaceable* and *righteous*, but possessed of these Qualities in the highest Degree. Or, which implies more, than any other Words can express, They shall be *Peace* and *Righteousness* itself.—The same beautiful Figure is used in the next Clause, which describes the inviolable *Security* of the City, together with the universal both *Joy* and *Piety* of the Inhabitants.



# DIALOGUE XVII. 393

“ *Stone* \* of perfect Absolution ; a Diadem, which  
 “ will shine with undiminished Lustre, when all the  
 “ brilliant Wonders of the Mine are faded, extin-  
 “ guished, lost.

“ Let richer Soils nourish the noblest Plants, and  
 “ warmer Suns concoct their exquisite Juices ; the  
 “ Lemon, pleasingly poignant ; the Citron, more  
 “ mildly delicious ; or that Pride of vegetable Life,  
 “ and Compendium of all the Blandishments of  
 “ Taste, the Pine-apple. We enjoy far more ex-  
 “ alted Dainties, in having Access to the *Tree of*  
 “ *Life* ; whose Leaves are for the *Healing of the Na-*  
 “ *tions* † ; whose Boughs are replenished with a  
 “ never-failing Abundance of heavenly Fruits ; and  
 “ the Nutriment they dispense, is Bliss and Immor-  
 “ tality.

“ Let *Iberian* Vines swell the translucent Cluster,  
 “ and burst into a Flood of generous Wine : let  
 “ the *Tuscan* Olive extract the Fatness of the Earth,  
 “ and melt into a soft mellifluous Stream. We shall  
 “ neither envy, nor covet these inferior Gifts, so long  
 “ as We may draw Water out of the Wells of Sal-  
 “ vation. So long as We may receive that *Unction*  
 “ *from the HOLY ONE* †, those Influences of the  
 “ COMFORTER, which not only make a  
 “ chearful Countenance, but gladden the very  
 “ Heart. Imparting such a *refined* Satisfaction, as  
 “ the whole World cannot give ; such a *permanent*  
 “ Satisfaction, as no Calamities can take away.

“ Let *Ethiopian* Mountains be ribed with Mar-  
 “ ble, and *Peruvian* Mines emboweled with Gold.  
 “ We want neither the impenetrable Quarry, nor  
 “ the

\* Rev. ii. 17.

† Rev. xxii. 2.

‡ 1 John ii. 20.

“ the glittering Ore ; having, in our adored MES-  
 “ SIAH, a sure *Foundation* for all our eternal  
 “ Hopes, and an inexhaustible *Fund* of the divinest  
 “ Riches.

“ Be it so ; that our *Isis* is but a creeping Drop ;  
 “ and the *Thames* itself, no more than a scanty Ri-  
 “ vulet ; compared with the magnificent Sweep of  
 “ the *Ganges*, or the stupendous Amplitude of *Rio*  
 “ *de la Plata* \*. The wretched Natives, even on  
 “ the Banks of those stately Rivers, are at a Di-  
 “ stance from all the Springs of true Consolation.  
 “ Whereas, We have a Fountain, We have a  
 “ River, that issues from the Ocean of eternal  
 “ Love. With incomparable Dignity, and with  
 “ equal Propriety, it is styled *The River of Life* †.  
 “ It visits the House of the Mourner, and revives  
 “ the Spirit of the Sorrowful. It makes glad the  
 “ City, and makes happy the Servants of our  
 “ GOD.

\* This River is near two hundred Miles broad, where it discharges itself into the Sea. It pours such an immense Quantity of the liquid Element into the *Atlantic Ocean*, that fresh Water may be taken up for the Space of many a League. It continues thus *amazingly vast* through a Course of six hundred Miles : when it divides into two mighty Branches, the *Parana* and the *Paraguay*. Which, having run in separate Channels, several thousand Miles along the Country, unite at last ; and form, by their Conflux, this magnificent and spacious Stream. Which is supposed to be the very largest in the World.—To conceive a proper Idea of its prodigious Dimensions, We may imagine a Current of Waters, taking its Rise beyond *Jerusalem* ; and, after having received all the Rivers of *Europe* into its capacious Bed, making its Entry on the *British Ocean*, by a Mouth extended from *Dover* to *Bristol*.

† Rev. xxii. 1.

“ GOD. It quickens even the Dead ; and every  
 “ human Creature, that drinks of its Water, lives  
 “ for ever.

“ Let *Asiatic* Islands boast their Mountains of  
 “ Myrrh, and Hills of Frankincense. Let *Ara-*  
 “ *bian* Groves, with a superior Liberality, distil  
 “ their healing Gums ; and ripen, for vigorous Ope-  
 “ ration, their vital Drugs. We have a *more sove-*  
 “ *reign* Remedy, than their most powerful Restora-  
 “ tives, in the great MEDIATOR’s atoning  
 “ Blood. We have a *more refreshing* Banquet,  
 “ than all their mingled Sweets, in commemorating  
 “ his Passion, and participating his Merits.

“ In short ; We have an Equivalent, far more  
 “ than an Equivalent, for all those choice Produc-  
 “ tions, which bloom in the Gardens, or bask in the  
 “ Orchards of the Sun. We have a Gospel, rich  
 “ in precious Privileges, and abounding with in-  
 “ estimable Promises : We have a SAVIOUR,  
 “ full of *forgiving Goodness*, and liberal of *renewing*  
 “ *Grace*. At whose auspicious Approach, Foun-  
 “ tains spout amidst the burning Defart ; under  
 “ whose welcome Footsteps, the sandy Waste smiles  
 “ with Herbage ; and beneath his potent Touch,  
 “ *The Wilderness buds and blossoms as a Rose* \*. Or,  
 “ to speak more plainly, the desolate and barren  
 “ Soul brings forth those Fruits of the SPIRIT,  
 “ which are infinitely more ornamental, than the  
 “ filken Gems of Spring ; infinitely more benefi-  
 “ cial, than the salubrious Stores of Autumn.

“ We

\* Isa. xxxv. 1.



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“ We have a SAVIOUR—Tell it out among  
 “ the Heathen ; that all the Nations on Earth, may  
 “ partake of the Gift, and join in the Song—A  
 “ SAVIOUR We have, whose radiant Eye  
 “ brightens the gloomy Paths of Affliction. Whose  
 “ efficacious Blessing makes *all Things work together,*  
 “ *for the Good* \* of his People. Death, gilded by his  
 “ propitious Smile, even Death itself looks gay.  
 “ Nor is the Grave, under his benign Administra-  
 “ tion, any longer a Den of Destruction ; but a  
 “ short and shady Avenue to those immortal Man-  
 “ sions ; whose *Foundations are laid with Sapphires ;*  
 “ *whose Windows are of Agate ; the Gates of Car-*  
 “ *buncle ; and all the Borders of pleasant Stones †.*”

Pardon my Rhapsody, dear *Theron*. Your own Remark, added to the grand and lovely Views, have warmed, have animated, have almost transported me.—*Theron* answered not a Word : but seemed fixed in Thought.—While He is indulging his Contemplation, We may just observe some other Peculiarities of the Prospect.

Here and there, a lonesome *Cottage* scarcely lifts its humble Head. No pompous Swell of projecting Steps, surrounds the Door : no appendent Wings of inferior Offices, skirt the Edifice : no stately Hall, flabbed with Marble, and roosed with Sculpture, receives the gazing Stranger. But young-eyed Health, and white-robed Innocence, with sweet-featured Contentment, adorn the Habitation. While Virtue lends her graces, and Religion communicates her

\* Rom. viii. 28.

† Isa. liv. 11, 12.



her Honours, to dignify the Abode: rendering the blameless Hutt superior, in *real* Majesty, to a dissolute Court.

At some Distance, appear the hoary Remains of an antient *Monastery*. Sunk beneath the Weight of revolving Years, the once venerable Fabric is levelled with the Dust. The lofty and ornamented Temple, lies rudely over-grown with Moss, or still more ignobly covered with Weeds. The Walls, where sainted Imagery stood, or *idolized* Painting shone, are clasped with twining Ivy, or shagged with horrid Thorn.—Through Isles, that once echoed to the Chantor's Voice, mingled with the Organ's majestic Sound, the hollow Winds rore, and the dashing Storm drives. Where are, now, the silent Cells, the vocal Choirs, the dusky Groves? In which the *romantic* Saints prolonged their lonely Vigils, by the midnight Taper; or poured their united Prayers, before the Lark had waked the Morn; or strolled, in ever-musing Melancholy, along the Moon-like Glade.—Surely, those mouldering Fragments now teach, (and with a much better Grace, with a much stronger Emphasis) what formerly their unsocial and gloomy Residentiaries professed. They teach the *Vanity* of the World, and the *transitory* Duration of all that is most stable, in this Region of Shadows.

Behold, on yonder Eminence, the rueful Memorials of a magnificent *Castle*. All dismantled, and quite demolished, it gives a Shading of Solemnity to the more lively Parts of Nature's Picture; and attempers the rural Delight, with some Touches of alarming Dread.—*War*, destructive *War*, has snatched the Scythe from the Hand of Time, and hurried

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hurried on the Steps of Destiny. Those broken Columns, and battered Walls; those prostrate Towers, and Battlements dashed to the Ground; carry evident Marks of an immature Downfal. They were built for Ages, and for Ages might have stood, a Defence and Accommodation to Generations yet unborn; if haply they had escaped the dire Assaults of hostile Rage.—But, what Vigilance of Man, can prevent the Miner's dark Approach? Or what Solidity of Bulwark, can withstand the bellowing Engine's impetuous Shock?

Those, perhaps, were the Rooms, in which *licentious* Mirth crowned with Roses the sparkling Bowl, and tuned to the silver-sounding Lute the Syren's enchanting Song. Those, the Scenes of voluptuous Indulgence, where Luxury poured her Delicacies: where Beauty, insidious Beauty, practised her Wiles; and spread, with bewitching Art, her wanton Snares.—Now, instead of the riotous Banquet, and Intrigues of lawless Love, the Owl utters her hated Screams by Night, and the Raven flaps her ominous Wing by Day.—Where are the Violet-couches, and the Woodbine-bowers; which fanned, with their breathing Sweets, the polluted Flame? The Soil seems to suffer for the Abuses of the Owner. Blasted and dishonoured, it produces nothing but ragged Briars, and noisome Nettles; under whose odious Covert, the hissing Snake glides, or the croaking Toad crawls.—Fearful Intimation of that *ignominious* and *doleful* Catastrophe, which awaits the Sons of Riot! When their momentary Gratifications will drop, like the faded Leaf; and leave nothing behind, but Pangs of Remorse,  
keener

keener far than the pointed Thorn, and more inveterate than the Viper's Tooth.

Perhaps, they were the beauteous and honoured Abodes, where *Grandeur* and *Politeness* walked their daily Round, attended with a Train of guiltless Delights. Where amiable and refined *Friendship* was wont to sit and smile; looking Love, and talking the very Soul. Where Hospitality, with Oeconomy always at her Side, stood beckoning to the *distressed*, but *industrious* \* Poor; and showered Blessings from

\* I say distressed, but *industrious* Poor—Because, I would not be understood, as encouraging, in any Degree, the Relief of our *common Beggars*.—Towards the former, I would cultivate a tender and ever-yearning Compassion; I would anticipate their Complaints; and, as a sacred Writer directs, would even *seek to do them Good*.—But as to the latter, I frankly own, that I look upon it as my Duty, to discourage such Cumberers of the Ground. They are, generally speaking, lusty Drones; and their habitual *Begging*, is no better than a specious *Robbing* of the public Hive. For such *sturdy* Supplicants, who are able to undergo the Fatigue of Traveling; able to endure the Inclemencies of the Weather; and consequently much more able, were they equally willing, to exercise themselves in some Species of laudable Industry—For these, the *House of Correction* would be a far more salutary Provision, than any Supply from our Table; and *Confinement to Labour*, a much more beneficial Charity, than the Liberality of the Purse.

We should remember, and they should be taught, that the Law ordained by the Court of Heaven, is, *If a Man will not work, neither shall He eat*. If then We contribute to support them in Idleness, do We not counteract and frustrate this wise Regulation, established by the great SOVEREIGN of the Universe?—Is it not also a *Wrong* to the deserving Poor, if We suffer these

Wens



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from her liberal Hand.—But War, detested War, has stretched over the social and inviting Seat, *the*  
*Line*

Wens on the Body politic to draw off the Nourishment, which ought to circulate amongst the valuable and useful Members?—Money or Viſtuals beſtowed on theſe worthleſs Wretches, is not real Beneficence, but the *Earneſt-penny* of Sloth. It hires them, to be good for nothing; and pays them, for being public Nuiſances.

Let us then unanimouſly join, to ſhake off theſe *dead Weights* from our Wheels, and diſlodge theſe *Swarms* of *Vermin* from our State. Let Us be deaf to their moſt importunate Clamours; and aſſure Ourſelves, that, by this determined Inflexibility, We do *GOD*, We do our *Community*, We do *them*, the moſt ſubſtantial Service.—Should they implore by the *injured* Name of *JESUS*; for the Honour of the *LORD JESUS*, let Us reſolutely with-hold our Alms. Their Meaning is,—  
 “ I cannot go on, in my preſent ſhameful and ini-  
 “ quitous Courſe; I can no longer continue to act  
 “ the *wicked and ſlothful Servant*; unleſs You will ad-  
 “ miniſter ſome kindly-pernicious Aſſiſtance. For  
 “ *CHRIST*’s ſake, therefore, aſſiſt me to diſhonour my  
 “ Chriſtian Name, and to live more infamouſly than  
 “ the vileſt Beaſts. For *CHRIST*’s ſake, help me to  
 “ be a Reproach and Burden to my native Country;  
 “ and to perſiſt in the Way, which leads to eternal De-  
 “ ſtruction.”—This is the *true Import* of their Petitions. And, whether the Sanction of that moſt venerable Name, added to *ſuch* a Requeſt, ſhould move our Commiſeration, or excite our Abhorrence, let every thinking Perſon judge.

I truſt, the Reader will be ſo candid, as to excuſe this long digreſſive Note; and do me the Juſtice to believe, That I am not pleading-againſt, but for the *real Poor*: not to *harden* any One’s Heart, but rather to *direct* every One’s Hand.—Give, out of Gratitude to *CHRIST*, out of Compaſſion to the Needy, and be for ever bleſſed. But give not to incorrigible Vagrants; to maintain Im-  
 piety.



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*Line of Confusion, and the Stones of Emptiness* \*. Now, alas! nothing but Desolation and Horror haunt the savage Retreat. The ample Arches of the Bridge, which so often transmitted the wondering Passenger along their pensile Way, lie buried in the dreary Moat.—Those Relics of the massy Portals, naked and abandoned, seem to bemoan their melancholy Condition. No splendid Chariots, with their gay Retinue, frequent the solitary Avenues. No needy Steps, with chearful Expectations, besiege the once bountiful Gate. But all is a miserable, forlorn, hideous Pile of Rubbish.

Since Riches so often take to themselves Wings, and fly away: since Houses, great and fair, reel upon their Foundations, and so soon tumble into Dust: how wise, how salutary, is our divine MASTER's Advice! *Make to yourselves Friends with the Mammon of Unrighteousness; that, when the World fails around You, when the Springs of Nature fail within you; they, as Witnesses of your Charity, and Vouchers for the Sincerity of your Faith, may receive You into everlasting Habitations* †.— This is to lay up Treasure for Ourselves ‡: Whereas, whatever else We amass, is for our Heirs, for our Successors, for We know not Who. This Wealth is truly and emphatically called *our own* ||: it is an

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Advowson;

piety, and pamper Indolence; lest it be demanded, one Day, *Who hath required this at your Hand?* Lest, by supporting dissolute Creatures in that abandoned Sloth, which is the Nurse of all Vice, We become Partakers of their Guilt, and accessary to their Ruin.

\* Isa. xxxiv. 11.

† Luke xvi. 9.

‡ Matt. vi. 20.

|| Luke xvi. 12.

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Advowson; We have the Perpetuity. Whereas, whatever else We possess, is ours only for a Turn, or in *Trust*.

See the dreadful, dreadful Ravages of *civil Discord*! Where ever that infernal Fury stalks, She marks her Steps in Blood, and leaves opulent Cities a ruinous Heap \*.—What Thanks then, what ardent

\* The Effects of what *Virgil* calls *Bella, horrida Bella*, were never displayed in Colours that glow, and with Figures that alarm, like those which are used by the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Chap. iv. 19, &c. As this is perhaps the greatest Master-piece of the Kind, the Reader will permit me to enrich the Notes, with a Transcript of the Passage.

First We see, or rather We feel, the Effects of War on the human Mind; the keenest Anguish, and the deepest Dismay. My Bowels! My Bowels! I am pained at my very Heart. My Heart maketh a Noise in me; I cannot hold my Peace: because Thou hast heard, O my Soul, the Sound of the Trumpet, the Alarm of War.—Destruction upon Destruction is cried; for the Land is spoiled. Suddenly are my Tents spoiled, and my Curtains in a Moment.—How long shall I see the Standard, and hear the Sound of the Trumpet?

Then We see the dismal Devastations of War; and who does not thunder at the Sight? The whole Country laid in Ruins! Deprived of all its Ornaments, and all its Inhabitants! Reduced to a Solitude, and a Chaos. I beheld the Earth, and lo! it was without Form and void: and the Heavens, and they had no Light.—I beheld the Mountains, and lo! they trembled, and all the Hills moved lightly.—I beheld, and lo! there was no Man, and all the Birds of the Heavens were fled.—I beheld, and lo! the fruitful Place was a Wilderness, and all the Cities thereof were broken down, at the Presence of the LORD, and by his fierce Anger.

If, after all this Profusion of Imagery, bold and animated even to Astonishment, We can have any Relish for the cold Correctness of a heathen Genius, We may find something of the same Nature in *Horace*, Lib. II. Od. 1.

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dent and ceaseless Thanks, are due to that all-superintending, ever gracious LORD, who has dashed the Torch from her Hand; has broke her murderous Weapons; and driven the baleful Pest from our *Island*!—May the same almighty Goodness shortly banish the accursed Monster from all Lands! Banish the Monster, with her hated Associate Rapine, and her insatiable Purveyor Ambition, to the deepest, deepest Hell. Branded with everlasting Infamy, and bound in adamantine Chains, *there* let them gnash their Teeth, and bite the inevitable Curb!—While *Peace*, descending from her native Heaven, bids her Olives spring amidst the joyful Nations: and *Plenty*, in League with Commerce, scatters Blessings from her copious Horn. While *Gladness* smiles in every Eye; and *Love*, extensive universal Love, leveling the Partition-wall of Bigotry, cements every Heart in brotherly Affection.

Near those Heaps of Havock, lies the Spot, ever-memorable and still revered, on which an obstinate and fatal Battle was fought.—The Husbandman, as He breaks his fallow Land, or rends the grassy Turf, often discovers the horrid Implements, and the more horrid Effects, of that bloody Conflict. He starts, to hear his Coulter strike upon the Bosses of a rusty Buckler, or gride over the Edge of a blunted Sword. He turns pale, to see human Bones thrown up before his Plough; and stands aghast to think, that, in cutting his *Burrow*, He opens a *Grave*.—The grey-headed Sire often relates to his Grandsons, hanging with eager Attention on the Tale, and trembling for the Event, relates the dismal, the glorious Deeds of that important Day.—



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Day.—How the Fields, now covered with waving Crops, were then loaded with mangled and ghastly Corpses. How the Pastures, now green with Herbage, were then drenched and incrimsoned with human Gore.

“ On *that* extended Common, He says, where  
 “ the busy Shepherd is erecting his hurdled Citadel,  
 “ the Tents were spread, and the Banners display-  
 “ ed; the Spears bristled in Air, and the burnished  
 “ Helmets glittered to the Sun:—On *yonder* rising  
 “ Ground, where the frisking Lambs play their  
 “ harmless Frolics, stood the martial Files, clad in  
 “ Mail, and ranged in Battle-array: stood War,  
 “ with all its collected Horrors, like some porten-  
 “ tous Cloud, ready to burst into an immediate  
 “ Storm.—On the *warier* Plain, where the quiet  
 “ Steed grazes in Safety, and those sober Oxen chew  
 “ the juicy Herb, the fierce Encounter mixed.  
 “ There, the Javelins, launched from nervous  
 “ Arms, and aimed by vengeful Eyes, flew and re-  
 “ flew, whizzing with Death. The Arrows light-  
 “ ened\* from the Strings; and drenched their keen  
 “ Points, and dipped their feathery Wings in Blood.  
 “ —Soon as this Shower of missive Steel ceased,  
 “ instantly

\* *Habaḥ. iii. 11.* ברק חניתך literally translated, presents Us with that beautifully bold Figure, *The Lightening of thy Spear.*—Which, with innumerable other Graces of Speech, that give Dignity and Spirit to our modern Compositions, are borrowed from the Language of *Sin*; are transplanted from the School of the Prophets.—If We start into a pleasing Amazement, at *Homer's* ἄσπετον πῦρ; have We not equal Reason to be charmed and surprized at *Nahum's* יתחילו הרכב? Every Chariot *raged* with Violence and Impetuosity; was eager, was even *mad* to destroy. *Nah. ii. 5.*



“ instantly outsprung Thousands of flaming Swords.  
 “ They clash on the brazen Shields; they cut  
 “ their Way through the riven Armour; and sheath  
 “ their Blades in many a gallant dauntless Heart.—  
 “ Here, on this distinguished Level, the proud pre-  
 “ sumptuous Enemy, confident of Victory, and  
 “ boasting of their Numbers, poured in like a  
 “ Flood. There, a bold determined Battalion, of  
 “ which myself was a Part, planted themselves like  
 “ a Rock, and broke the fierce Attack.  
 “ Then, adds the brave old Warrior, then the  
 “ coward Herd fled before the Vengeance of our  
 “ conquering Arms. Then, these Hands strewed  
 “ the Plains with a Harvest, different far from their  
 “ present Productions. Then, *the Fathers*, smitten  
 “ with inexpressible Dread, *looked not back on their*  
 “ *Children* \*; though shuddering at the lifted Spear,  
 “ or

\* For this very striking, and most terrific Image, We are obliged to the Prophet *Jeremiah*. Who, in a few Words, but with all the Pomp of Horror, describes the Din of approaching War, and the Consternation of a vanquished People. *At the Noise of the Stamping of the Hoofs of his strong Horses, at the Rushing of his Chariots, and at the Rumbling of his Wheels, the Fathers shall not look back unto their Children, for Feebleness of Hands.* Jerem. xlvii. 3.

Not to mention the Thunder-like Sound of the Diction; and that in a Language much less sonorous than the Original; I appeal to every Reader, Whether the last Circumstance does not awaken the Idea of so tremendous a Scene, and so horrible a Dread, as no Words can express. *Virgil* has imitated the Prophet's Manner, in that very delicate descriptive Touch; where, representing the prodigious Alarm, excited by the Yell of the infernal Fury, He says;

“ *Ecce 3di illa yd, padio adt Et*

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“ or screaming under the brandished Sword. *The*  
 “ *Fathers* looked not back on their Children, though  
 “ they fell among the Slain, gashed with deadly  
 “ Wounds; or lay expiring, in Groans of Agony,  
 “ under our Feet.”

We leave the Warrior, to repeat his shocking Story, and enjoy his savage Satisfaction. For calmer Scenes, and softer Delights, We willingly leave Him.—The Eye is pleased with the elegant Gaiety of the Parterre; the Ear is soothed with the warbling Melody of the Grove; but *grand* Objects, and the *Magnificence* of Things, charm and transport the whole Man. The Mind, on such Occasions, seems to *expand* with the Prospect, and secretly exults in the Consciousness of her Greatness.—Intent upon these large and excursive Views, our Friends scarce advert to the minuter Beauties, which address them on every Side. The *Swan*, with her snowy Plumes, and loftily bending Head; notwithstanding all her superb Air, and lordly State; *rows*

*Et trépide Matres pressere ad Pectora Natos.*

That is, *Each frightened Mother clasped the Infant to her fluttering Bosom.*

Now One, I believe, need be informed, that the *Pan-  
 mictis* painted, with a very superior Energy, by the Poet  
 of Heaven. In the *Pagan's* Draught, the Effect of  
 Fear results from the Constitution, and coincides with  
 the Bias of Humanity. Whereas, in the *Prophet's*  
 Picture, it *recounter-acts*, it *suspends*, it *intirely over-bears*,  
 the tenderest Workings and strongest Propensities of Na-  
 ture; though instigated, on one Hand, by the most  
 importunate Calls of exquisite Distress; and stimulated  
 on the other, by all the Solicitations of the most yearn-  
 ing Compassion.

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rows by, without exciting Admiration, or obtaining Notice.—Equally unnoticed is both the Array, and the Action of the *Duck*; her glossy Neck, and finely chequered Wings; her diving into the Deep, or her darting up into Day.—The *Swallow*, skimming the Air in wanton Circles, or dipping her downy Breast in the Flood, courts their Observation in vain.—Nor could the *finny Shales* attract their Regard, though they played before the Boat in sportive Chace; or, glancing quick to the Surface, shewed their pearly Coats, bedroped with Gold.—Thus they, engaged in sublime, neglect inferior Speculations. And if the Sons of Religion overlook the *diminutive, transient, delusory* Forms of Pleasure, which float on the narrow Stream of Time, or flit along the scanty Bounds of Sense; it is only to contemplate and enjoy a Happiness in their *G O D*, which is *elevated, substantial, and immortal*. Compared with which, whatever the Eye can survey, from Pole to Pole, from the rising to the setting Sun, is a Cockle-shell, a Butterfly, a Bubble.

From this open and enlarged Scene, they enter the Skirts of a vast, umbrageous, venerable *Forest*.—On either Side, the sturdy and gigantic Sons of Earth, rear their aged Trunks, and spread their branching Arms. Trees, of every hardy Make, and every majestic Form, in agreeable Disorder, and with a wild kind of Grandeur, fill the aerial Regions. The huge, expansive, roaming Boughs unite themselves over the Current, and diffuse “their Umbrage, broad and brown as Evening.”—The timorous *Deer* start at the Clashing of the Waves. Alarmed with



the unusual Sound, they look up, and gaze for a Moment: then fly into Covert, by various Ways, and with precipitate Speed; vanishing, rather than departing, from the Glade.

How awful to reflect, as they glide along the shelving Shores, and the moss-grown Banks; as they sail under the pendent Shades of quivering Poplar, of whistling Fir, and the solemn-sounding Foliage of the Oak—how awful to reflect; “These were the  
“lonely Haunts of the *Druids*, two thousand Years  
“ago! Amidst these dusky Mazes, and sympathetic  
“Glooms, the pensive Sages strayed. Here, they  
“sought, they found, and with all the Solemnity of  
“superstitious Devotion, they gathered their *Mi-*  
“*stæoe*\*. Here the visionary Recluses shunned the  
“tumultuous Ways of Men, and traced the myste-  
“rious Paths of Providence. Here they explored  
“the Secrets of Nature, and invoked their fabled  
“Gods.”

Sometimes

\* If the Reader pleases, He may see these pompous Solemnities described, in *VANIERII Præd. Russ.* pag. 125, &c. Where, the curious Narrative of *Pliny*, is embellished with the harmonious Numbers of *Virgil*.—With regard to the Reflections, occasioned by this Account; the Compliments lavished on the *French*, their *Religion*, and their *Monarch*; I believe, the judicious *Protestant* will confess with me, that as our charming Author has copied the Language, and entered into the Spirit of the *Antients*; He has also caught a Tincture of their Superstition. Imbibing, together with all their Elegancies and Graces, some of their fanfiful and legendary Levities.

*Verum ubi plura nitent in Carmine, non Ego paucis  
Offendar Maculis.* H. O. R.



Sometimes wrapt in a sudden Reverie of Thought, sometimes engaged in Conversation on the solemn Appearance of Things, the Voyagers scarce perceive their Progress. Before they are aware, this venerable Scene is lost; and they find themselves advanced upon the Borders of a *beautiful Lawn*. The Forest, retiring to the Right-hand, in the Shape of a Crescent, composed what *Milton* styles, “A verdurous Wall of stateliest Aspect;” and left, in the Midst, an ample Space for the Flourishing of Herbage.

Here, said *Theron*, if You please, We will alight; and leave the Bearer of our *floating Sedan*, to pursue his ceaseless Course—to enrich the Bosom of other Vallies, and leave the Feet of other Hills—to visit Cities, and make the Tour of Counties—to reflect the Image of many a splendid Structure, which adorn his Banks; and, what is far more amiable, to distribute, all along his winding Journey, innumerable Conveniencies both for Man and Beast: acquiring, the farther He goes, and the more Benefits He confers, a deeper Flow, and a wider Swell; to the remarkable Confirmation of that beneficent Maxim, *There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth* \*.

*Theron* and *Aspasio*, walking across the spacious Amphitheatre, seated themselves at the Extremity of the Bend. Before them, lay a verdant Area, quite even; perfectly handsome; but far from gay. Green was all the Dress, without any Mixture of gaudy Flowers, or glittering Colours. Only, now-and-then, a gentle Breeze, skimming over the undulating Mead, impressed a varying wavy Gloss on its Surface. The whole seemed to resemble the decent

\* Prov. xi. 24.

decent, and sober Ornaments of *maturer Age*, when it has put off the Trappings, and bid adieu to the Levities of Youth.—The broad, transparent Stream, ran parallel with the Lips \* of the Channel; and drew a Line of Circumvallation, as it were, to guard the calm Retreat. It appeared, where shaded with Boughs, like a Barrier of polished Steel; where open to the Sun, like a Mirror of flowing Crystal.—The eastern Edges of the River, were barricaded with a kind of mountainous Declivity; on whose rude and rocky Sides, the timorous Rabbit burrowed, and the bearded Goat browsed.—Not far from the Summit, two or three Fountains gushed: which, uniting their Currents, as they trickled down the Steep, formed a natural *Cascade*: here, it was lost in the rushy Dells, or obscured by the twisting Roots; there, it burst again into View, and playing full in the Eye of Day, looked like a Sheet of spouting Silver.

In this romantic Retirement, said *Theron*, We are quite sequestered from Society. We seem to be in a World of our own; and should almost be tempted to forget, that We are encompassed with a kindred Species; did not the *Musick* of those silver-tongued Bells, poured from a distant Steeple, and gliding along the gentle Stream, bring Us News of human Kind.

Escaped from Man, and his busy Walks, methinks, We are come to the House of Tranquility. Such a deep, undisturbed Composure reigns all around! It is as if some august Personage was making his Entrance,

\* The *Greek*, which is above all Languages happy, in its beautiful Variety of compound Words, very neatly expresses this Appearance by—*αποχύνει* *απὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ*.

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trance, or some majestic Being was upon the Point to speak, and all Nature stood fixed in attentive Expectation. No Place better fitted to cherish, or to inspire, a *contemplative Sedateness*.

Observe the Simplicity and Grandeur of those surrounding Trees: the noble Plainness of their Verdure, and the prodigious Stateliness of their Aspect. What a *Speck* are our Gardens, and what a mere *Dwarf* are our Groves, compared with these vast Plantations?—Here is none of your nice Exactness, but all is irregularly and wildly great. Here are no Traces of the Shears, nor any Footsteps of the Spade, but the Handy-work of the DEITY is apparent in all,—Give *me* the Scenes, which disdain the puny Assistance of Art, and are infinitely superior to the low Toils of Man. Give *me* the Scenes, which scorn to *bribe* our Attention, with a little borrowed Spruceness of Shape; but, by their own native Dignity, *command* our Regard. I love the Prospects, which, the Moment they are beheld, strike the Soul with Veneration, or transport it with Wonder; and cry aloud, in the Ear of Reason, *Ascribe Ye Greatness to our GOD*.—Such, I think, in a very eminent Degree, is the Forest;

— — — *High waving o'er the Hills,  
Or to the vast Horizon wide diffus'd,  
A boundless deep Immensity of Shade.*

*Asp.* Solomon's refined Genius seems to have been fond of the same Situation, and delighted with the same Objects. Therefore, at a great Expence, and in the most curious Taste, He built *The House of the Forest*.—*Isaiab's* divine Imagination was charmed with  
the



the same grand Spectacle. More frequently, than any of the Prophets, He derives his Illustrations from it. One Comparison I particularly remember. Speaking of the *Affyrian* King, and his military Forces, He likens them to such an Assemblage of Trees: *numerous*, as their amazing Multitudes; *strong*, as their massy Trunks. Yet, numerous and potent as they were, they should all be brought low, and laid in the Dust. *For behold the LORD, the LORD of Hosts shall lop the Bough with Terror, and the High Ones of Stature shall be hewn down, and the Haughty shall be humbled; and he shall cut down the Thickets of his Forest with Iron, and Lebanon shall fall by a mighty one\*.*

Then He passes, by a most beautiful Transition, to his darling Topic, the Redemption of Sinners. He gives Us, together with one of the finest Contrasts † imaginable, a View of the MESSIAH and his great Salvation. When those lofty Cedars are leveled with the Ground, *there shall come a Rod, a Twig shall spring from the Stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his Roots ‡.* Which, notwithstanding its mean Original, and unpromising Appearance, shall rear its Head to the Skies, and extend its Shade to the Ends of the Earth.

*Ther.*

\* Isa. x. 33, 34.

† This fine Contrast, and that artful Transition are, by the injudicious Division of the two Chapters, very much obscured, if not quite lost, to many Readers. The Chapters, I think, should by no means be separated; but, the tenth and the eleventh, as a Continuation of the same Prophecy, should be united.

‡ Isa. xi. 1.



*Ther.* You do well, *Aspasio*, to recal my roving Thoughts. This magnificent Solitude had captivated my Imagination, and I was giving a Loose to the usual Sallies of my Fancy. But, with a willing Compliance, I turn to a more excellent Subject.—Only I must assure you, that your Remark awakens a painful Idea in my Mind, though a joyful one in your own. For, my Hopes, which were once high and lifted up, are now too much like that devoted prostrate Forest.

*Asp.* My dear *Theron*, give me leave to say, they were never rightly founded. They were, what *Shakespeare* calls, *the baseless Fabric of a Vision*. Now the shadowy and transient Hopes are demolished, that solid and everlasting Joys may succeed. Let them rest on *CHRIST*, the infinitely glorious REDEEMER, and they shall never be overthrown, never be removed any more.

Cast a Look upon yonder Ivy. What can be more feeble? It has not Strength enough to withstand the slightest Blast. Nay, if left to itself, its own Weight would crush it to the Earth. Yet, by twining around the Oak, how high it rises, and how firm it stands! An Emblem of our State, and a Pattern for our Imitation.—Thus let Us, who in ourselves are nothing, of ourselves can do nothing, let us fly to *CHRIST*; rely on *CHRIST*; and, as *Barnabas* (that true Son of Consolation) speaks, *cleave to the LORD JESUS CHRIST, with full Purpose of Heart\**. Let us determine to know nothing, to desire nothing, to depend on nothing, but *JESUS CHRIST* and Him crucified. Let this be the Mot-

to

\* Acts xi. 23.

to for our Faith, this the Language of our Souls, *CHRIST is All*. Then shall our Virtues, though hitherto smitten with a Blast, revive as the Corn: Then shall our Hopes, though in themselves weaker than the Ivy, mount like the Cedars.

*Ther.* You can hardly imagine, how a Sense of Guilt and Unworthiness oppresses my Mind. I am often discouraged, and cannot bring myself to be steadfast in Faith, or joyful through Hope.

*Asp.* You cannot bring yourself, but GOD Almighty's Power and Grace can bring to pass these desirable Effects. And hear what the Prophet says farther, upon the charming Topic which introduced our Discourse. Whenever the eloquent *Isaiah* undertakes to display a Truth, He gives it all the Energy, all the Beauty, and every heightening Touch, which it is capable of receiving.—This humble Shoot, springing from the Stem of *Jesse*, shall rise to such a Pitch of Elevation; that it shall be conspicuous far and near, and stand for an Ensign of the People. It shall be seen, not like a Beacon upon the Top of an Hill, by the *Israelites* only; or the Natives of a single Territory; but like the great Luminaries of Heaven, shall be visible in every Country, and by the whole inhabited World.—To it shall the Gentiles seek; not only from the remotest, but from the most barbarous and idolatrous Climes. These, even these Persons, though savage in their Nature, and detestable in their Manners, shall be freely admitted, and find Rest under his Shadow. Nay, the Refreshment which He yields, and the Comfort which they receive, shall be not seasonable only, but of sovereign Efficacy; his Rest shall be glorious\*.

From

\* *Isa* xi. 10.

From this we learn, that all the Blessings of *CHRIST*'s Mediation are designed for *Gentiles*; for the most abandoned and abominable Sinners.—That they are so full and consummate, as to create a Calm of Tranquility, a glorious Rest, in the most troubled, afflicted, guilty Consciences.—And I dare challenge even my *Theron*'s misgiving Mind, to specify any Want which is not supplied, any Grievance which is not redressed, by the Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.—I formerly encountered your *Objections*, let me now combat your *Scruples*.

*Ther.* Sometimes, I have a deep and distressing Conviction of my extreme Sinfulness.—'Tis like a sore Burden, too heavy for me to bear.—'Tis like the vilest Filth, and renders me odious to myself; how much more lothesome to the all-seeing Eye?—It appears like a Debt of ten thousand Talents, and I have nothing, no, not any Thing to pay.—Then I experience, what the *Psalmist* so pathetically laments; *My Sins have taken such Hold upon me, that I am not able to look up: yea, they are more in Number than the Hairs of my Head*, and my Heart is ready to fail: my Hopes are upon the Point to expire.

*Ass.* Then, *Theron*, fly to that just and righteous ONE, who is the Strength of our Hearts; the Life of our Hopes; and our Portion for ever.

If Sin is a sore Burden, look unto *CHRIST*, who bore it all, in his own Body on the Tree; and removed, intirely removed that tremendous Load, which would otherwise have sunk the whole World into the nethermost Hell.—If Sin renders us filthy; let Us have recourse to that Blood of Sprinkling, which



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which cleanses, not from a few Stains only, but from all Guilt. By which the most defiled Transgressors become fair as the fairest Wool, nay whiter than the virgin Snows \*.—If Sin is a Debt †; subjecting Us to Wrath, and binding Us over to Punishment; let Us confide in that gracious SURETY, who has taken the Debt upon himself, and made it all his own. And not only so, but has paid it; paid it to the uttermost Farthing, to the very last Mite: So that Justice itself can demand no more.

Let me confirm and illustrate this comfortable Truth, by a scriptural Similitude. No Similitudes are more exact, and none so striking. *I have blotted out as a thick Cloud your Transgressions, and as a Cloud your Sins* †. A little while ago, the whole Expanse of yonder Sky was covered with Clouds. Nothing could more strongly represent, a Multitude of Corruptions besieging the Heart, and a Multitude of Iniquities overspreading the Life.—But where is, now, that immense Arrangement of gloomy Vapours? The Sun

\* Psal. li. 7.

† By these three Images, the *Psalmist* displays the horrible and destructive Malignity of Sin, together with the free Nature and invaluable Worth of evangelical Forgiveness. *Blessed is he whose Transgression*, as an insupportable Load, (עוֹן) *is bore or taken away*; *whose Sin*, as being the most abominable Filth, (כִּסִּי) *is covered*; *unto whom the LORD imputeth not* (לֹא יִשְׁמַר) *that most ruinous of all Debts, Iniquity*.—It is pleasing to observe the Vehemence and Ardour, with which the royal Penitent speaks on this favourite Topic. He breaks out with a Kind of holy *Abruptness*, and pours his Soul in a *Variety* of warm Expressions. As one who thought, he could not possibly enter upon the Subject *too soon*, or dwell upon it *too long*. Psal. xxxiv. 1, 2.

‡ Isa. xlv. 22.



Sun has shone them, and the Wind has swept them, clean away. There are none, neither great nor small, remaining. From one End of the wide extended Hemisphere to the other, we see nothing but the clear and beautiful Blue of the Firmament. So saith the SPIRIT of GOD to the true Believer, *so totally* is your Guilt, however horrid and enormous, done away through the dying JESUS.

*Ther.* It is not possible to conceive, nor will the whole Creation afford, a more exquisitely fine Comparison. Perhaps, nothing can so emphatically describe the most prodigious Multitude, intirely obliterated, without the *least Trace* of their former Existence.—But I am not only chargeable with *past* Iniquities; I am also liable to *daily* Miscarriages. I relapse into Sin; and when I would do Good, Evil is present with me.—Nay; my best Hours are not free from sinful Infirmities, nor my best Duties from sinful Imperfections. Which, like a Worm at the Core of the Fruit, eat away the Vigour of my Graces, and tarnish the Beauty of my Services.

*Asp.* Because, through the Frailty of your mortal Nature, You cannot always stand upright; because, even the *just Man falleth* daily, and daily contracteth Defilement; therefore a Fountain is opened for Sin and for Uncleanness\*. The Blood and Attonement of CHRIST are compared to a heavenly Fountain. In which polluted Sinners may wash daily, wash hourly; and be constantly, perfectly clean.—A Cistern may fail; may be broken or exhausted. But it is the Property of a real Fountain, never to be dried up,

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\* Zech. xiii. 1.

always to yield its Waters. Such is the Efficacy of *CHRIST*'s Death; not to be diminished by universal and by incessant Use. *It removes the Iniquity of the Land\**. *It takes away the Sin of the World†*. It is new, for our Application, every Morning; new, for this blessed Purpose, every Moment. On which Account, it makes complete Provision for our Cleansing, our Restoration, and our Comfort.—Especially, as it is not only sovereign in itself, and always free for our Approach, but is ever pleaded by a great *HIGH-PRIEST* in our Behalf. Therefore, the inspired Casuist directs Us to *this* Source of Consolation, under all the Upbraidings of Conscience, and all the Remains of inbred Depravity. *If any Man sin, We have an Advocate with the FATHER, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous, and He is the Propitiation for our Sins‡*.

*We*; *St. John* reckons Himself in the Number of those frail offending Creatures, who stand in need of *CHRIST*, as a perpetual Intercessor. This is written, not to encourage Us in the Commission of Sin; but that *We* may be the less discouraged, under a Sense of our Infirmities.—*We have*; not *We* possibly may, but *We* actually have. A Soul burdened with Guilt, cannot be satisfied, cannot be eased, with a bare *Perhaps*. It is therefore positively affirmed; as a Matter of established Certainty; of which *We* should not admit a Doubt.—*We* have for our Advocate, not a mean Person, but *HIM* who received an illustrious Testimony from the most excellent Glory, *This is my beloved SON§*—Not a guilty Person

\* Zech. iii. 9.  
§ 2 Pet. i. 17.

† John i. 29.

‡ 1 John ii. 1.

son, who stands in need of Pardon for Himself, but *JESUS CHRIST the Righteous*—Not a mere Petitioner, who relies purely upon Liberality; but one who has *merited*, fully merited whatever He asks; *He is the Propitiation for our Sins*, has paid our Ransom, and purchased our Peace—In consequence of which, He *claims* rather than asks our renewed, our irrevocable Forgiveness—This he claims, not from an *unrelenting* Judge, but from his FATHER and our FATHER—And can such a Plea meet with a Repulse? Can such an Advocate miscarry in his Suit?—If the Prophets of old were reckoned, *The Chariot of Israel, and the Horsemen thereof*\*; because, like their Ancestor *Jacob*, they had Power with GOD, and prevailed in Prayer: O! what a Defence! what a Security, is the divinely excellent, and ever prevailing Intercession of *JESUS CHRIST*.

“Your Graces, You complain, are sullied, and “Your Services defective.”—Then, my dear Friend, renounce them in Point of Confidence; and gladly receive, cordially embrace, the all-perfect Righteousness of your LORD. So shall your Justification

D d 2

be

\* 2 Kings ii. 12. xiii. 14. There is a peculiar Beauty, and most apposite Significancy, in this *proverbial* Saying, as used by the antient *Israelites*. *Horses* and *Chariots* were deemed, in those Ages, the principal Strength of the Battle, the most formidable Apparatus of War. Of these the *Israelites* were intirely destitute. Their GOD had expressly forbidden them to multiply Horses; and We never read of their bringing any considerable Number of Cavalry into the Field.—But, so long as they enjoyed the Presence of their Prophets, they wanted not this Arm of Flesh. They had more than an Equivalent for Chariots and Horses, in the *servent*, the *effectual* Prayers of those holy Men of GOD.



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be *complete*; and your Services, though deficient in themselves, be "*accepted* in the BELOVED." —I have somewhere seen, painted upon a flat Surface, an awkward and disagreeable Countenance: In which was nothing regular, nothing graceful, but every Feature disproportionate. Yet this very Face, reflected from a cylindrical Mirror, has put off its Deformity; the Lineaments became well adjusted; Symmetry connected every Part, and Beauty smiled throughout the Whole.—Like the *former* our Virtues appear, when compared with the immaculate Purity of GOD, or the sublime Perfection of his Law. But they acquire the Amiableness of the *latter*, when presented to the FATHER by our divine MEDIATOR, and recommended by his inconceivably precious Oblation \*.

*Milton*, taking his Hint from the Revelations of St. *John*, represents our great HIGH-PRIEST, in this glorious and delightful Attitude. Represents Him, offering up the Supplications and penitential Duties of our first Parents; mixing with them  
the

\* *They*, the Persons and Performances of frail Men, shall come up with Acceptances on mine Altar, saith the LORD. Isa. lx. 7.—Which is explained by St. *Peter's* Comment; *Ye are an holy Priesthood, to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices, acceptable unto GOD by JESUS CHRIST*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. And still farther ascertained by St. *Paul's* Practice. Who, when He addresses the MAJESTY of Heaven with any Petition, or presents the Tribute of Praise, presumes not to do either the one or the other, but in the blessed MEDIATOR's Name. Because, secluded from this grand Recommendation, they would be *offensive* to the awful JEHOVAH, "as Smoke in his Nostrils;" accompanied with it, they are *acceptable*, "as the sweet smelling incense."



the Incense of his own Merits ; and thus interceding before the Throne.

*See, FATHER! what first Fruits on Earth are sprung*

*From thy implanted Grace in Man ! These Sighs  
And Prayers, which in this golden Censer mix'd  
With Incense, I thy PRIEST before Thee bring.*

*— — Now therefore bend thine Ear*

*To Supplication ; hear his Sighs though mute !*

*Unskilful with what Words to pray, let ME*

*Interpret for Him ; ME his Advocate*

*And Propitiation. All his Works on ME,*

*Good, or not good, ingraft : MY Merit those*

*Shall perfect ; and for these MY Death shall pay\*.*

The Poet's Words are very *emphatical*. Yet Words can no more express the *Prevalence* of our LORD's Negotiation, than the Picture of the Sun can diffuse its Splendor, or convey its Warmth.

*Ther.* My spiritual Wants are many. I have many Duties to discharge, and many Temptations to withstand : many Corruptions to mortify, and many Graces to cultivate, or rather to acquire. Yet have I no Stock, and no Strength of my own.

*Asp.* I rejoice, that my *Theron* is sensible of his own Indigence. The good LORD keep Us both, in this Respect, as little Children ; whose whole Dependence is upon their Nurse's Care, or their Parent's Bounty ! Then may we, having such a

D d 3

Sense

\* Par. Lost, Book XI. l. 22, &c.

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Sense of our Poverty, and having a great HIGH-PRIEST over the House of GOD, come boldly to the Throne of Grace. We may apply, through the Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST, for all needful Succour, and for every desirable Blessing.— If Solomon could say; LORD, remember David, and all his Trouble. If Moses could say; LORD, remember Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob thy Servants. How much more confidently may we say; “ LORD, remember JESUS, the Son of thy “ Love! Remember JESUS, and all his Sufferings; JESUS and all his Merits. Shall “ they be sent empty away, who have their SAVIOUR’s Obedience to plead?”—No verily. Though they are altogether unworthy in themselves, yet worthy is the LAMB that was slain, for whose Sake their Petitions should be granted, and their every Necessity supplied.

Let me repeat to you a most beautiful and encouraging Portion of Scripture. Which you may look upon, under all your Wants, as *Charte Blanche* put into your Hand by GOD all-sufficient. Having therefore, Brethren, Boldness to enter into the Holiest by the Blood of JESUS; by a new and living Way which he has consecrated for Us, through the Veil, that is to say, his Flesh; And having an HIGH-PRIEST over the House of GOD; let us draw near with a true Heart, in full Assurance of Faith\*.

The Apostle, in this Place, and throughout this whole Epistle, alludes to the *Mosaic Ordinances*; in order to shew, that the Privileges of the Christian Dispensation,

\* Heb, x. 19, 20, 21, 22.

Dispensation, were typified by, yet are greatly superior to, those of the *Jewish*.—Among the *Jews*, none but the *High-Priest*, was permitted to set a Foot within the Holy of Holies; and He, only on the solemn Day of Expiation. Whereas, *all Christians* are allowed to enter into the immediate Presence of the most High GOD; may have the nearest Access to HIM, who dwells in the Heaven of Heavens; and this, not once in the Year only, but at all Times, and on all Occasions.—The High-Priest never made that awful Approach, but with the Blood of a *slaughtered* Animal. We have Blood of infinitely richer Value, to atone for our Failings, and recommend our Addressees; even the Blood of the *crucified JESUS*.—*Aaron* entered through the Veil of the Temple; a Way, which was soon to become antiquated, and for ever to be abolished. *We* enter by a far more noble Way; by the Flesh of our blessed REDEEMER; given as a propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins. Which Way is both *new* and *living*; such as never waxes old, will subsist to the End of Time, and leads to eternal Life.—Trusting in this Sacrifice, and entering by this Way, which are consecrated on Purpose for our Use, We may not only draw near, but draw near *with Boldness*, with an humble filial Confidence; and present our Supplications with *Faith*—with *Assurance* of Faith—with *full Assurance* of Faith.

How strong is the Contrast, and how fine the Gradation! How precious the Doctrine, and how free the Privilege! What shall we fear, if we believe this Doctrine? What can we lack, if we im-

prove this Privilege?—And why should We not believe the former, why should We not improve the latter? Since they both are founded, not on any excellent Endowments, not on any recommending Actions of our own, but *purely, solely, intirely* on the Blood of *JESUS CHRIST*.

*Ther.* There may come Seasons of *Desertion*, when all Graces are languid, if not dead: When the Light of GOD's Countenance is suspended, if not turned into Darknes: and the Man is more like a lifeless Log, than a zealous *Christian*. These Frames of Mind I have heard mentioned, and I begin to know something of them by Experience.

*Asp.* Then *Theron*, when you walk in Darknes, and see no Light of sensible Comfort, trust in the Name, the unchangeable Grace, of the LORD; and stay upon the Righteousness, the consummate Righteousness, of your GOD \*. This is not barely my Advice, but the Direction of an infallible Guide.—This agrees also with the Character of a real *Christian*, as it is most exactly drawn by an unerring Pen; *We rejoice in CHRIST JESUS, and have no Confidence in the Flesh* †; no Reliance on any

\* Isa. 1. 10.

† *Phil.* iii. 3. *Exactly drawn*—Perhaps, there is no where extant a finer, a more complete, or so lively a *Picture* of the true *Christian*. 'Tis in *Miniature*, I own: but it comprehends all the *master Lines* and every *distinguishing Feature*. *We are they, who worship GOD in the Spirit*; with the spiritual Homage of a renewed Heart; with Faith, Love, Resignation. *And rejoice in CHRIST JESUS*; in Him look for all our Acceptance with GOD; from Him derive all the Peace of our Minds; and



any Thing of our own, either for present Joy, or future Glory.

To rely on the Elevation of our Spirits, or the Enlargement of our Devotion, is like building our House upon the *Ice*: which may abide for a Season; but upon the first Alteration of Weather, ceases to be a Foundation, and becomes “Water that runneth apace.” Whereas, to derive our Consolation from the MEDIATOR’s Righteousness, and JEHOVAH’s Faithfulness, is to build our Edifice upon the *Rock*: which “may not be removed, but standeth fast for ever.” The former of these, even amidst all our Changes, is invariably the same. The latter, notwithstanding all our Unworthiness, is inviolably sure. Therefore, the *Fruit* of that Righteousness is Peace, and the *Effect* of this Faithfulness is, if not rapturous Joy, yet *Quietness and Assurance for ever* \*.

So that, when it is Winter in my Soul, and there seems to be a Dearth on all my sensible Delights, I would still say with the Psalmist; “*Why art thou so disquieted, O my Soul? CHRIST is the same amidst all thy Derelictions. He is a green Fir-Tree* †, which never loses its Verdure. Under his Shadow Thou may’st always find Repose. His Merit and Atonement are still mighty to save; they constitute an everlasting and infinite Righteousness. The Promises of GOD, through his

and on Him place all the Hope of our final Felicity. And have no Confidence in the *Flesh*; renouncing ourselves, in every View, as unprofitable Servants; disclaiming all our own Works and Attainments, as defective Services.

\* Isa. xxxii. 17.

† Hof. xiv. 8.

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“ his Mediation, *are yea, and amen* \* ; are unqueſtionably and unalienably thine.”

*Ther.* 'Tis very probable, I may meet with *Afflictions*; Death in my Family, or Diſeaſe in my Perſon. Diſappointments may frustrate my Deſigns. Providence may wear a frowning Aſpect, as though the LORD had a Controverſy with his ſinful Creature, and was making Him to poſſeſs the Iniquities of his Youth. And what will be ſufficient to ſupport and to chear, in ſuch a gloomy Hour † ?

*Aſp.* The Righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*.—Nothing is ſo ſovereign, to calm our Fears, and remove all Apprehenſions of the divine Wrath. Apprehenſions of the divine Wrath, would draw the Curtains of Horror around our ſick Beds, and throw upon our languiſhing Eye-lids the Shadow of Death ‡. But a believing Improvement of *CHRIST*'s Satisfaction for our Offences, *clears up* the mournful Scene, and *takes away* the Sting of Tribulation.

Attending to this great Propitiation, the Sufferer ſees his Sins forgiven, and his GOD reconciled. From

\* 2 Cor. i. 20.

† The Sufficiency of *CHRIST*'s Righteouſneſs, to answer all theſe important and delightful Ends, is excellently diſplayed in Mr. RAWLIN's Sermons, on *CHRIST the Righteouſneſs of his People*. In which the Public have ſeen the grand and amiable Eſſentials of the Goſpel, delivered in maſculine Language; defended by nervous Reasoning; and animated with a lively Devotion.

‡ Alluding to that Deſcription of Tribulation and Anguiſh, which, I believe, no Perſon of Senſibility can read without ſhuddering; *My Face is foul with Weeping, and on my Eye-lids is the Shadow of Death.* Job xvi. 16.

From whence he concludes, that the severest Afflictions are only fatherly Corrections; shall not exceed his Ability to bear; and shall assuredly obtain a gracious Issue. He can fetch Comfort from that cheering Word, *I will be with him in Trouble*: And expect the Accomplishment of that most consolatory Promise, *I will deliver Him, and bring him to Honour* \*.—These Supports have enabled the Saints, to kiss the Rod, and bless the Hand, which chastised them. To possess their Souls, not in Patience only, but in Thankfulness also. While they have *looked inward*, and discerned their absolute Need of these bitter but salutary Medicines: Have *looked upward*, and beheld the Cup in a most wise and tender PHYSICIAN's Hand: Have *looked forward*, with a joyful Hope, to that better World; where GOD will wipe away all Tears from their Eyes, and there shall be no more Sorrow, nor any more Pain.

*Ther.* The last Occasion of Need is the trying Hour of *Death*, and the tremendous Day of *Judgment*. Will this Righteousness carry Us, with Safety, through the darksome Valley, and present us, with Acceptance, at the dreadful Tribunal?

*Asp.* It will: It will.—This silences all the Curses of the Law, and disarms Death of every Terror. To believe in this Righteousness, is to meet Death at our SAVIOUR's Side; or rather, like good old *Simeon*, with the SAVIOUR in our Arms.—*They overcame*, says the beloved Disciple, they overcame the last Enemy, not by natural Fortitude, or philosophic

\* Psal. xci. 15.



philosophic Resolution, but *by the Blood of the LAMB\**; by a believing Application of the victorious REDEEMER's Merit.—*I know*, adds the heroic Apostle, *whom I have believed†*; I am assured, that my *JESUS* is infinitely faithful and will not desert me; that his Ransom is absolutely sufficient, and cannot deceive me. Therefore, with a holy Bravery, He bids Defiance to Death; or rather, triumphs over it, as a vanquished Enemy; *Thanks be to GOD who giveth Us the Victory through our LORD JESUS CHRIST‡!*—Nay, through the wondrous Efficacy of *CHRIST's* Propitiation, *Death is ours*||; not our Foe, but our Friend and Deliverer. We may number it among our Treasures; and rest satisfied, That *to die, is Gain.*

What? Though our Flesh see Corruption. Though this Body, vile at present, be made viler still, by dwelling amidst Worms, and mouldering in the Dust; yet through *HIS* Righteousness, who is the Resurrection and the Life, it shall shake off the Dishonours of the Grave: It shall rise to a new and illustrious State of Existence: It shall be made like the *glorious* and *immortal* Body of our triumphant LORD.—If the Body be so refined, so exalted; what will be the Dignity, what the Perfection, of the Soul! Or rather, of Soul and Body both, when they are happily and indissolubly united, at the Resurrection of the Just?—Shall they have any thing to fear, when the Judgment is set, and the Books are opened? 'Tis probable there will be  
no

\* Rev. xii. 11. † 2 Tim. i. 12. ‡ 1 Cor. xv. 57.  
|| 1 Cor. iii. 22.



no Accufation, 'tis certain *there is no Condemnation, to them that are in CHRIST JESUS* \*. Who fhall lay any Thing to their Charge? *It is GOD* — not Man, or Angel, or any Creature, but *GOD* — *that juftifies* them. The *GOD* whose Law was broke, the *GOD* to whom Vengeance belongeth, He Himfelf pronounces them *innocent*, becaufe their Iniquities have been laid upon *CHRIST*; He Himfelf pronounces them *righteous*, becaufe they are interefted in the Obedience of their *REDEEMER*; on thefe Accounts, He Himfelf pronounces them *blessed*, and gives them an *abundant Entrance* into the Joy of their *LORD*.

But what can exprefs, or who can imagine their Happinefs, when they take up their Abode, in the Palaces of Heaven; amidft the Choirs of Angels; and under the Light of *GOD's* Countenance! When they poffefs *the Hope of Righteoufnefs* †; when they wear *the Crown of Righteoufnefs* ‡; and receive that great, that eternal Salvation, which is an adequate Recompence for the Humiliation and Agonies of *JESUS CHRIST the righteous* §.

Come then, my dear *Theron*, let Us henceforth be as Branches, ingrafted into the heavenly *VINE*; derive all our Sap, all our Moifture, all our Confo-  
lation, from his Fulnefs. Let Us live upon our all-  
fufficient *REDEEMER*, as the *Ifraelites* fub-  
fifted on their Manna from Heaven, and their Wa-  
ters from the Rock, and not wifh for *other*, as we  
cannot poffibly enjoy *better* Sufenance.

*Ther.*

\* Rom. viii. 1. † Gal. v. 5. ‡ 2 Tim. iv. 8.  
§ 1 John ii. 1.

*Ther.* Is this Meaning of our LORD's Exhortation, when he shews the Necessity of *eating his Flesh, and drinking his Blood*?

*Ans.* 'Tis the very same. A repeated and incessant Application of our SAVIOUR's Merits, for all the Purposes of Piety and Salvation, is the Kernel of this Nut, the Meaning of this Metaphor.—*When* we habitually avert to *JESUS CHRIST*, as dying for our Sins, and rising again for our Justification; performing all Righteousness, that we may be intitled to an eternal Crown; and interceding in Heaven, that we may be filled with all the Fulness of GOD: *Then* we eat 'his Flesh, and drink his Blood. Then we derive a Life of solid Comfort, and real Godliness, from his mediatorial Offices; just as we derive the Continuance of our natural Life, from the daily Use of alimentary Recruits.

*Ther.* Your Discourse brings to my Remembrance that magnificent and beautiful Passage in Scripture, where *CHRIST* is called *THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS*. Your Doctrine sets the Comparison in a very advantageous Light; gives it the utmost Force, and the greatest Propriety.—The Righteousness of *CHRIST*, according to your Account, is as extensively useful in the *Christian* Life, as the Beams of that grand Luminary are in material Nature.—The Sun fills the *Air*; where it diffuses Light, and creates Day.—The Sun penetrates the *Ocean*; from whence it exhales Vapours; and forms the Clouds.—In the *vegetable* Creation, the Sun raises the Sap, and protrudes the Gems; unfolds the Leaves, and paints the Blossom; distends the Fruit, and concocts the Juices.—Turn we to the *animal* World;

World; the Sun delights the Eye, and gladdens the Heart. It awakens Millions of Insects into Being: and imparts that general Joy, which every sensible Creature feels. Indeed, *there is nothing bid from the Heat thereof.*

*Ans.* Thus the LORD JESUS CHRIST, that true and only *Sun of Righteousness*, arises on his People *with Healing in his Wings* \* So various, so efficacious, and so extensive are his Influences. Like a *Sun*, He inlightens and inlivens: like *Wings*, He cherishes and protects: like a Remedy, He *heals* and restores. And all, by virtue of his Righteousness, on account of his *Righteousness*.—Nor can we doubt, nor need We wonder, if we consider its Nature and its Author. Its *Nature*; it is consummately excellent, has every Kind, and every Degree of Perfection. Its *Author*; it is the Righteousness and Obedience of that incomparable PERSON, in whom *dwells all the Fullness of the GODHEAD.*

It must therefore—You will permit me to sum up in a Word, what has been displayed at large—It must be fully answerable to the *Demands* of the *Law*, even in its highest Purity, and utmost Exactness.—It is infinitely superior to the *Demerit* of *Sin*, and intirely absolves from all Guilt, intirely exempts from all Condemnation.—It is a most valid and never failing Plea, against the *Accusations* of *Satan*, and the Challenges of Conscience.—It establishes an undoubted *Title* to every Blessing, whether in Time or in Eternity, whether of Grace or of Glory.—It is a sure Support for the Christian, in an Hour of *Desertion*, and in the Agonies of *Death*. Casting Anchor on this Bottom, He may dismiss every Fear, and

\* Mal. iv. 2.



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and ride out every Storm. Leaning upon this Staff, He may go down to the Repose of the Grave; and neither be appalled at the solemn Harbingers of Dissolution, nor terrified at its far more awful Consequences.—The Merit of this Righteousness, and the Power of its DIVINE AUTHOR, will unseal the Tomb; will bring forth the sleeping Dust from the Chambers of Putrefaction; and build up the whole Man into Immortality and Glory. By this He will be presented *without Spot* \*; presented *faultless* †; yea, be presented *perfect* ‡, and with *exceeding Joy*, before the Throne.

What a Gift then is the *Righteousness of CHRIST*! —Blessed be GOD, for all the indulgent Dispensations of Providence! Blessed be GOD, for all the beneficial Productions of Nature! But above all, blessed be GOD, for the transcendent and unspeakable Gift of *CHRIST*—For the unsearchable and infinite Treasures of HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.

\* Eph. v. 27. † Jude 24. ‡ Col. i. 28.





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